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Pacific School of Religion Berkeley, Calif.

THE NEW-CHURCH REVIEW

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THE
NEW-CHURCH REVIEW

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FOUNDATIONS UNDERLYING RATIONAL BELIEF IN THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE

BY THE REV. EVERETT K. BRAY

THE subject of Providence is the subject of the meaning of life. If we ask, Is there Providence? we ask, Does life have meaning? If we ask, How far does Providence extend? we ask, How far does life have meaning? So, when we ask, as in these studies, What is the Lord's Providence? we ask, What is the meaning of life—of all life?

There are those who flatly deny that life has meaning. In a little Blue Book of the series put out by Haldeman-Julius, I came upon this question, "Has Life Any Meaning?", treated in debate between the author, Mr. Frank Harris, and America's official rationalist, Mr. Percy Ward. Neither believes in immortality, yet Mr. Harris finds life worth while, while it lasts. Yet the "meaning" of it is left without definition; enjoyment of it is what he really addresses his arguments to: and the implications are that the "enjoyments" which make it attractive to him are chiefly sensuous. An under-running purpose of Guiding Intelligence in it is not brought to view. Nor do I see how this could be possible apart from belief in immortality.

On the other hand, Mr. Ward quotes Schopenhauer with emphasized approval, in the assertion, "Life is a uselessly

disturbing episode in the blessed repose of nothingness." He bases his argument that life is meaningless on three claims: first, that all living things, along with the earth, are doomed to death and destruction; second, that life's dominant law is age-long and world-wide struggle for existence; and third, that the chief experience of living things is suffering and pain. "My whole case," he says, "is based on these three." We may sum up, then, the Rationalist claims against meaning in life by three words: "destruction," "struggle," "suffering." We shall be dealing with these points directly and indirectly as we proceed in this study. It would scarcely be possible to deal profitably with the meaning of life without dealing with the meaning of its problems. No progress is possible in this subject, however, without beginning at foundations. And this means attaining first a right view of the universe.

It was notable of the clear mind of Swedenborg that, always, from childhood on through all the years of his tireless and richly contributive researches in science and philosophy, a meaningless universe, or even a meaningless thing, was to him unthinkable. To his thought always, there must be an uncaused Cause, an uncreated Creator. The universe was a universe because it was the work of One Creator. Being the work of a Will-Mind Being, that is, a Person, it must be the exposition of Will and Thought and Plan—it must express Purpose: just as much so as that the works of every will-mind creature we know as "man" have to be the exposition of will and thought and plan—that is, *purpose.*

I've never known but one author to publicly declare that his writings had "no purpose." And, from the samples he gave in an evening's "readings" from his works, I have to confess, it was easy to agree with him. But it would not have been easy to waste a second evening so purposelessly. If I were to become for a moment analytical and imputative, I should say that in spite of his honestly meant assertion, he did have one motive: that was one had in common with all who are human—the motive of self-expression. The trouble in his case was that, so far as was in evidence, his "self"

expressed no interest in other selves, save to put himself before them for their admiration. Evidence of "self-expression" with the thought in view of some use to others would have made a whole world of difference in the effect.

In these studies we shall be dealing with the mature teachings of Swedenborg after the Lord had opened his spiritual senses, and led him into full conscious life in the spiritual world. After some fifteen years of this unique habitual two-world consciousness and experience, he published two great books in two successive years, having the challenging, declarative title, "Angelic Wisdom concerning": with the first it was "concerning The Divine Love and The Divine Wisdom"; with the second it was "concerning The Divine Providence." At the beginning of the work on "The Divine Providence" (published at Amsterdam in 1764) he turns the reader back to the "Angelic Wisdom concerning the Divine Love and Wisdom" with the notice that "To understand what the Divine Providence is . . . it is important to know what has already been said and shown respecting the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom in the work on that subject."

That work really presents the created universe in its relation to its Creator. Of it he says: "The purpose of this work is to uncover causes." The field of the work on "The Divine Providence" is distinguished as, "the government of the Lord's Divine Love and Divine Wisdom," or, "the conservation of the state of things after creation." In briefest outline the picture, seen from Heaven, may be put this way: 1. The Lord, the Creator, is Divine Love *and* Divine Wisdom. 2. It is the nature of Love to love; of Wisdom to operate in wisdom. 3. Thus, He is as wise as He is loving; as loving as He is wise. 4. He wills objects to love; and by Wisdom, in Wisdom, He produces them. 5. He creates out of Himself — not, as has been supposed, "out of nothing." 6. Thus, what He creates is from Love and Wisdom; and is Love and Wisdom put forth. 7. This putting forth is by a process now revealed as operation by "discrete degrees," whereby that which is a coming-forth

from the Creator is not the Creator when come forth; and nothing that is created is itself Divine. 8. And yet, that which is from Him has Himself in it, and never can be wholly severed from Him; for severance would be total cessation from existence—inasmuch as He is the only Cause, the only Source, the only Life.

A summary picture of this relation between the Creator and His creation is given in a posthumous work on the subject (Divine Wisdom, XII, 3), as follows: "The sun of Heaven, in which is the Lord, is the common center of the universe. All things of the universe are circumferences beyond circumferences even to the last. These He rules from Himself alone, as one continuous thing. But the intermediates He rules from the last: these He unceasingly animates and makes active." The concept here tersely put in merest outline is the great luminous key at the center of the New-Church outlook upon life and the universe.

Our difficulties in thinking profitably in this subject will be lessened greatly if we can in some degree free ourselves from the limiting ideas of space, in drawing upon this key picture.

If we can see the Lord at the center of His universe, not after the pattern of the center of a globe, but after the pattern in view when we speak of "the central purpose of a plan," or "the central idea" in a program proposed, we shall be moving in the right direction. Note these points: 1. "All things in the universe are creations from the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom of God-Man" (Divine Love and Wisdom, n. 52).* 2. "All things in the created universe are recipients of the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom of God-Man" (n. 55). Because created from, they continue to be recipients of, the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom which the Lord is. To conceive how this reception is momently taking place, reflect on how love can be in and fill one's plans and thoughts and acts of the day; on how love is in a word of guiding truth, and in a deed of kindness or of

*All numbers given in this paper refer to paragraph numbers in the work "Divine Love and Wisdom," unless otherwise designated.

mercy. Think on how affection and thought unite to form purpose, and then abide in that purpose so long as it endures; on how the purpose is ever in the preparation of study and drill for the life-use which one whole-heartedly chooses; and then, how it is in the expression of itself in the life-use, and in each particular case of that expression: as in the artist's painting, in the musician's rendition, in the speaker's utterance, in the writer's words, in the business-man's product and service, in the teacher's teaching, in the home-maker's home. In all these cases purpose is present in the general plan, and it is in every minutest particular which has to go into the expression and expressions of it. This means that it is *in* the fingers that direct the brush, or keys, or strings, or type, or pen; that it is *in* the eye which observes and directs, and the ear which detects and stands in judgment,—in short, in the whole body; furthermore, that it is *in* every least muscle and fiber and cell which in any degree participates in the execution of any expression of this purpose. This is obvious, when brought to attention—isn't it? That is, the cells, fibers, muscles, organs and the body are obvious; and the executions of these are obvious. But as veritable object of thought, does the purpose stand forth with equal clarity and definiteness? Not until one has accustomed himself to analytical habits of thinking. And yet, *the most real object of all is the purpose.* This it is that directs and gives being to all the rest—and at every point. It is the life and it is the power and it is the guide in everything of all the series. It is not a mere name; it is an activity, an organized activity. Follow it a bit further. It is constituted of affection and thought united upon an end. Affection and thought are activities of love and reason, which in turn are functions of will and understanding, which in turn are the twin names for a soul. In the purpose, then, is the soul of the man; and it is *in* every element of every endeavor unto expression to which the purpose leads. It is thus that we find help to see how the soul is in space and in time, and yet itself no part of space or of time; yet, withal, it is the most real thing of all experience of space and time; it is the experiencer of them,

the interpreter of them, the utilizer of them. And it is *in* every iota and moment of them to which its consciousness extends.

With these reflections in mind we should be prepared to value the great truth from the light of Heaven: "The Divine *apart from space* fills all spaces of the universe" (n. 69). The crucial importance of knowing this, and of living into it with some degree of comprehension, is insisted upon as follows: "If man does not raise his mind above these [time and space], he can in no way perceive things spiritual and Divine; for these he involves in ideas derived from space and time: and so far as this is done the light of his understanding becomes merely natural. . . . From this cause comes naturalism" (*ibid.*). The truth of this principle is made clearer, perhaps, when we reflect upon our state of consciousness with respect to the Lord when praying. Wherever on the face of the globe we are in prayer, in whatever direction of the compass we face, He seems before us, somewhat above,—and near according to our feeling of "nearness" to Him in will and love. And we think of Him as being wholly present—that is, as to His whole nature, as Person. Never does our soul's experience in relation to Him conceive of Him as partly present and partly elsewhere; where He is present at all, He is wholly present, He Himself is there. And if we cannot think of Him in any other way in our own practical relation with Him, why should we attempt it in the relations of the rest of the universe to Him? Indeed, the reflections we have pursued on the universal presence of the soul in man's activities and interests, wherever his consciousness extends, show, it seems to us, that rational thinking excludes all possibilities of conceiving of the Lord as in any way separated from His universe or any part of it, while at the same time excluding the possibility of thinking of Him as being any part of His universe—just as the soul is not to be thought of as any part of the body.

This leads us to this further deep truth from Heaven, namely: "The Divine in things greatest and least is the

same" (n. 77). This truth is not so easy to see in things spatial, as in the cases where we consider purpose, love, plan, idea. But when we carry these concepts over into the immeasurably great, and then again over into the immeasurably small, we find, so far as we can trace, in one direction quite as obviously as in the other, evidence and presence of design, plan, order, purpose. And where these are, we must see and confess: "Surely the Lord is in this place." For further help to attainment in this way of thinking we are given the following instruction:

> Put away space and deny the possibility of a vacuum, and then think of the Divine Love and Divine Wisdom as being Essence itself: space having been put away, and a vacuum denied. Then think again according to space, and you will perceive that the Divine in the greatest and in the least things of space is the same. *For in essence abstracted from space* neither great nor small is possible, but the same (n. 81, italics ours).

Considered from this point of view of essence, which we may conceive in terms of purpose or end-in-view, we have this further illuminating principle, seen in clear light by angels: "All things created from the Lord are uses: [and] they are uses in the order, degree, and respect in which they have relation to man, and through man to the Lord *a quo*" (n. 327). These "uses" are purposes-in-form, purposes of the Divine Love-Wisdom Person the Lord is, looking ever to Love-Wisdom uses to human souls. And in these uses, and in every individual one of them, the Divine Love-Wisdom Person *is in Person present*, looking to the end-in-particular He there has in view. And that end, in every electron or atom, and in every island-universe of space, and in every moment, and in every age of time, is *some use to man.*

There are many planes of uses operating for man. Those a man first thinks of are such as come to mind from the literal reading of the first Charter of Rights given to the race, in the familiar words:

> Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the

air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed: to you it shall be for meat. (Gen. 1:28-30.)

But the real use underlying all these uses, and intended in them, is that of the deeper and spiritual reading, suggested in the Lord's words when He was here in incarnation, namely: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "Is not the life more than meat? and the body than raiment?" "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

From this point on we shall be dealing with the Lord's purpose in His Providence, which is defined as "The Government of the Lord's Divine Love and Wisdom."

In the Lord Divine Love and Divine Wisdom are a perfect one. And they proceed as a one from Him, in creating. But in being received, where man enters into the operation, they are separated. This was not so in the beginning, but has been since the days of the departure from "Eden," with its heavenly order of human life. It is "the end of Divine Providence that every created thing, in general and in particular, shall be such a one [that all the parts shall operate in a balance of perfect harmony, i.e., "in unity"]; and if it is not, that it shall become such."

Together with this is an aspect of it which more obviously involves man. That aspect is this: That the perpetual operation of the Lord's Life into His universe, requires that it shall complete a circuit. That is, there must be a return. Life must have its cycle, and come back to its Source in the Creator. With all action there must be reaction; for without this there would be nothing effected. With Love there must be reciprocation. It is the nature of love in going forth, that it shall experience love coming back.

But how was the Lord possibly to realize love coming

back to Him from what we call the "dead things of nature"; or from the vegetable and the animal kingdoms? There was but one way. That way is *through man.* As these minister to man, and man is made aware that these ministries of nature to him are from the Lord and that they are expressions and objects of the Lord's Love-planning for him, and provision for him, and as man, living from these enjoyments, lifts his thought and heart in gratitude to the Lord, then and there it is that love as love and thought as thought return to the Love-Wisdom Lord, and life at that point attains its cycle, completes its circuit. There at that point, through that soul, is the Lord's creation coming back to Him, and to that degree His purpose is realized.

This shows man's significance in the great vast universe of untracked spaces which in respect to bulk so dwarf him into unmentionable insignificance. All this is not only for man; but without man it would be sheer futility to the Creator-Lord. Without man as the medium it could not return to the Lord; and lacking completion of the circuit, life in its going forth would come to mere stagnation. But a dead universe is unthinkable. So somewhere there must be love returning to the Lord, from Whom Love is ever pouring forth for love-experiencing beings to receive and return.

We have some glimpse of this given in the Lord's words regarding the Vine and the branches. That He is the Vine, and we are the branches; and that severed from Him we could no more live than branches cut from their vine. And likewise that as the vine needs the branches to effect its use and find its joy of living, so He needs us, to effect His purpose and satisfy His living. This is indicated both in the parallel and in the definite words: "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you . . . that ye might go, and bring forth fruit."

We must not, however, think of the Lord needing man in the same way that man needs the Lord. For the Lord gives from Himself what is original in Himself; while what man gives to the Lord is only a return of what comes to him momently from the Lord. So the Lord desires man solely

to the end that He may give true joy of life to man. And it is in the doing of this that the problem of Providence centers. How the quality of the Lord's Love and the nature of what we call "His need" tower above man's love and need in nature, is shown in the nature of the use to the Lord which the universe renders. Seen as the angels see it, that use to Him is this: it is the means of delivering the blessedness of His Own life to men. *It enables Him to give, and to be received.* It is in the degree that any atom serves to this purpose, that it is *a use unto the Lord.* When He wept over Jerusalem, it was because Jerusalem refused to know the things that belonged to her peace. When He pled, through Abraham, for Sodom and Gomorrah, it was wholly for their sakes, just as it was later to Israel through the prophets: "Turn ye, for why will ye die, O house of Israel! Turn ye, and live."

The end of the universe is, that there may be conjunction of man in love with the Lord, so that the Lord may give to man the experience of blessedness which is perhaps best comprehended in His own words, "My joy," and "My peace," and "life more abundant." On this point we quote a few words of angelic wisdom:

> The essence of spiritual love is doing good to others, not for the sake of self, but for the sake of others; infinitely more is this the essence of Divine Love. It is the love of parents for their children, in that parents do good to their children from love, not for their own sake, but for their children's sake. This is especially manifest in a mother's love for her babe. Because the Lord is to be adored, worshiped and glorified, He is supposed to love adoration, worship, and glory for His own sake; but He loves these for man's sake, because by means of them man comes into a state in which the Divine can flow in and be perceived. [For it is only] by means of these [that] man puts away that which is his own, which stops influx and reception; for what is man's own, which is self-love, hardens the heart and shuts it up. . . . From all this it follows, *that the use which the Lord performs for Himself through man, is that man may be able to do good from love; and since this is the Lord's love, its reception is the enjoyment of His love.* (N. 335.)

In the "Arcana Cœlestia," n. 8719, we are told that the reason why the Lord takes man and angel into partnership

with Him, and relies upon them, in doing good to other men and angels, is to give to man and to angel this satisfaction of feeling one's self helpful in good—which is really the greatest satisfaction experienced in human life. So even here, in His need of us, He allows this need for our sakes. "Even to the passion of the cross" He goes *for our sake.*

To help us to see the Lord's Providence whole, as it were, that is, to see its largest and completest aspects, we should gather up some of the implications of what we have already observed about the creation. There are especially two great truths which stand out as involved in the combined relation of the Lord to His universe and the purpose He has in it. First: the whole universe, and every particle of it, as being from Him, created and sustained out of His Love by His Wisdom, must be an expression of Himself; and being an expression of Himself, it must represent Him, must be, that is, in some real sense, an image of Him. Theologians and philosophers have seen this logical and inescapable implication, when once a Creator is admitted. But they have struggled in vain to see how a so-called dead universe, or even a mineral-vegetable-animal universe, can be "an image" of a Personal Being. One of the most earnest recent efforts to come to this solution which we have seen, is made by Prof. D. C. Macintosh, Professor of Theology at Yale University. But like the others he leaves us quite "up in the air," with a most unsatisfying concept of God as Person, thrown out as possible solution. But the Person of the Lord does not have to be attenuated or dissolved, in the "angelic wisdom" concerning Him and His universe, to show how His creation is to be thought of as "an image" of Him. For here is the key. See how simple it is—and yet how rationally sound and profound. It is "viewed as to uses" that "it is an image of Him." Here they are in part of their context. It is to be borne in mind *"that God as a Man is the form of all uses;* from which form all uses in the created universe derive their origin; thus that *the created universe viewed as to uses, is an image of Him"* (n. 298). What view is to be taken of uses in this definition is specified thus (in the same number):

The things are called uses which from God-Man, that is, from the Lord, are by creation in order. . . . Those things which are from what is man's own are not called uses; since what is man's own is hell, and whatever is therefrom is contrary to order.

The other great special truth, which is a corollary to this and bound up as one with it, is that man, being the sum of all the ends of the whole creation, the end to which the Lord looks in creating every thing which He creates, must therefore be in a fuller sense (or, shall we say, in a combined sense) an expression, and so "an image," of the Lord—which is what the revealed Scriptures declare at the beginning. The special truth emerging from this view of man as that which the Lord looks to in every thing else of creation is, that man also must be a miniature universe, or that (as stated in the light of angelic wisdom, n. 319) "All things of the created universe, viewed as to uses, represent man in an image." Thus we have the vision of creation whole, we may say. Viewed from respect to uses, the whole and every smallest part of creation outside of man, so far as it is in its order, not only represents and expresses the Lord, but since man expresses disorder as well as order, everything without exception is representative and expressive of something within the nature of man. Man therefore cannot touch any thing, or be touched by any thing, which does not have some relation to him, and which, from the point of view of function or use, is not in some respect, and in some degree, a reflection of himself. What is of order and in order in the world around him is related to what is of order and in order in himself; while what is of disorder and in disorder is related to what is of disorder and in disorder in himself. It was even through man that disorder came to earth in the first place; and it is because of man's disorder that it continues to come.

But ever since the disorder came into man, and by man into the universe, the Lord's Providence has not withdrawn, has not in the least altered its purpose or its endeavor to carry blessing and blessedness to man. But in the midst of the disorder, and of every item and degree of disorder, the

Divine Love is present, and is operating in incomparable Wisdom to bring the soul out of disorder and into heavenly righteousness, peace, joy; that is, into noble, true manhood, which is to actualize again that "image and likeness of the Lord" into which he was first created. Now that evil is here, the Lord even makes evil to serve some use to man who is in evil, as is illustrated in the use of poisonous substances as remedies to cure poisonous conditions in the body.

It may seem, perhaps, that thus far the matter is kept in the region of theory with logical deductions from accepted premises, but premises which might be rejected in the face of practical conditions which life faces. We are ready to agree that this claim may be made with some apparent ground. But whoever takes this ground puts himself under obligation to offer something more believable by the rational mind in its place. Though we make the difficulties of the system above outlined as numerous and great as may possibly be done, we have yet to see any other explanation of the universe and human life proposed which does not raise difficulties far greater and more numerous for reasonable thought to accept. For ourselves we cannot entertain a view of creation existing without a Creator. Order without a Mind ordering it, substance without a Being producing it, entity, existence, without a Purpose bringing it to be, for us is unthinkable and unbelievable. Since to account for every thing I face, whichever way I turn my eyes or my thought, I must perceive a Personal Creator behind it, I must believe in God. And after this God, this Love-Wisdom God revealed in the light of angelic wisdom, has once been pictured to me, one moment's thought of belief in any other than He is beyond imagining. This is truly the kind of God, truly the very God, Whom I see in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who alone is "my Lord and my God," "without Whom was not any thing made that was made," and "Who was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." Therefore when this picture of the Divine Nature, and the Divine Plan, and the Divine Care, comes to me free of all boasting of human ingenuity (which

always seems to say, "See what I have done by my great brain! see what I have devised as my creation!"), comes to me in the humble name of Divine Mercy's pure revelation out of Heaven, suggesting no glory for any man, but for the Lord alone, I confess that every thing within me affirms "Surely this is none other than the Sun of Heaven shining, the Love-Wisdom gift of such a truth unfolding as to offer a measure of rational satisfaction to the minds of men such as has never been before." And assuredly in this new vision is fulfilled for me the promise "that as the lightning that lighteneth out of one part under heaven shineth unto the other, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be"; and, in its other form, "In that day I will show you plainly of the Father." Moreover, everything I know of the devisings of men tells me that nothing short of revelation out of Heaven, none less than the Lord Himself, could have brought forward so beneficent, so consistently rational, so divinely worthy a picture and explanation of the Creator in relation to His universe. Without reservation, therefore, I accept it as the revelation it declares it is. Every consideration of my reason, every concept I have of what God ought to be and do, every inmost intuition of what human life ought to mean and may mean, drives in upon me the unassailability of its truth. Completely I accept it.

In keeping with the beauty of this picture of the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom operating ceaselessly for man, and as even the better part of it, we have revealed its eternity. The second major declaration of the work on "The Divine Providence" is: "The Lord's Divine Providence has as its end a heaven from the human race." "Heaven," this declares, "is conjunction with the Lord." Conjunction with the Lord makes heaven for any man in this life quite as truly as in the hereafter. Indeed it must be begun here, if it is to continue hereafter. But the great pledge is, that once here begun, it shall go on forever. This joy of growing in achievement, in effective power over our faculties, this exquisite joy of catching visions and bringing them to fulfilment,—yes, and ever wider, truer, deeper, worthier

visions bringing to more and more adequate expression,—this is to go on without break, without end, in the life eternal.

Therefore the Lord looks to this endlessness of blessing in the joy of living in the way of His Providing, in every moment of every life. He looks to this even in the bringing of each soul to birth. So we are assured: "He provides an inheritance for those who are to be born, as He provides for those already born." (Arcana Cœlestia, n. 1865.)

Because of this eternal nature of man, and because what he shall be eternally is what is at stake in every thing, so much so that the temporary things of time are of no consequence whatever save as they affect man for eternal things and for eternity, therefore it is one of the corollary principles of the Lord's Providence that "The Lord's Providence looks in every thing that it does to what is infinite and eternal." Therefore it is to the endless happiness of man, in a collective and individual life of joy-filled reception and reciprocation of the Lord's out-going Love and Thought for man, that the Lord in the beginning looked in creating, and that He looks in the bringing forth of every soul that is born, and in every moment of the whole earth-time experience of every one of His human children.

If any man does not come into this experience, this eternal blessedness, it is from no fault but his own alone. The way is open to all, and the invitation is for all.

Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well. . . . Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool: If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the Land. (Isaiah, 1.)

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come. . . . Incline your ear and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live. . . . For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, to give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish

that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. (Isaiah, lv.)

And later, when He came in incarnation, His gospel message was: "He that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." "Come unto Me . . . and ye shall find rest unto your soul. . . . My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

Finally let us turn our thought to the actuality of the Lord's presence in all things of His universe, and the bearing of this upon the nature and efficacy of His Providence. We quote from the work "True Christian Religion," nn. 52, 53, and 56:

The Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnipresence of God can be clearly understood only when it is known what order is, and when it is known that God is order; and that He introduced order both into the universe and into each and all things of it at the time of their creation. (N. 52.)

God is order because He is substance itself and form itself. He is substance because all things that subsist have come forth and continue to come forth from Him. He is form because every quality of substances has sprung and continues to spring from Him, quality having no other source than form. (N. 53.)

God's Omnipotence in the universe, with each and all things of it, proceeds and operates in accordance with the laws of His order. God is omnipotent because He has from Himself all power; while all others have power only from Him. *His power and His will are one.* [This is of utmost bearing upon the whole subject of Creation and of Providence.] *And as He wills only what is good, He can do nothing but what is good.* In the spiritual world no one is able to do anything contrary to his will, and this is derived from God, because His power and will are one. Moreover, God is Good itself, therefore in His doing good He is in Himself; and to go out of Himself is impossible. Evidently, then, God's omnipotence must go forth and operate within the sphere of extension of the good; and this sphere is infinite. For *this sphere, from the inmost, fills the universe and each and all things in it;* and from the inmost rules the things which are without, so far as they conjoin themselves with it in accordance with the laws of their own order. *And if they do not conjoin themselves with it, it still sustains them, and by every endeavor labors to restore them to an order that is harmonious with the universal order,* in which God Himself is in His omnipotence, and in accordance with which He acts. And when this is not accom-

plished they are cast out from Him; but even then He none the less sustains them from the inmost. (N. 56.)

Probably no man lives who does not have moments indicative of this larger plan, this way of blessedness meant for him. Surely it is the experience of every one to come upon moments wherein life seems to reach perfection; wherein, as it were, everything about one, extending even to the far horizons, seems so blended in one mood as to be but a farther expansion of the self, when eye, ear, and all the senses as in one, blend to make of one's self and one's universe a completely satisfying harmony. These moments are foretastes of what is meant to be, of what we are moving toward, so far as "self" can be induced to release its hold, and give the Divine Love and Wisdom Purpose for us to have His way in us.

EVERETT K. BRAY.

COPIES OF THE NEW-CHURCH REVIEW FOR APRIL 1932 NEEDED.

The publishers of this REVIEW will be grateful for the return of a few copies of the issue of April 1932 by subscribers who no longer care to keep their copies.

LAVATER AND SWEDENBORG

By the Rev. Othmar Tobisch

SEVERAL people have made efforts to discover the influence of Emanuel Swedenborg (Swedish scholar, theologian, and "spirit-seer") upon certain German poets and thinkers. First, it was Dr. Immanuel Tafel of the University of Tübingen who traced, in a rudimentary collection of documents (1840), certain relations between Wieland, Klopstock, Kant, and Swedenborg. Later, Erich Schmidt (outstanding German historian of literature), in a study entitled "Goethe's Faust in Its Original Form" (Weimar, 1899), showed certain use of Swedenborgian ideas by Goethe. Soon afterwards Max Morris published a collection of passages from "Faust" which had definite relations to passages in the "Arcana Cœlestia." More recently Waldo Cutler Peebles has rounded out these inquiries in a thesis "Swedenborg's Influence upon Goethe" (an Honor Thesis at Harvard University in 1917).* The writings of the greatest of the "Storm and Stress" period thus seem to have been thoroughly searched for any possible influence upon them from Swedenborg; but minor authors have been neglected. I have, therefore, taken it upon me, to collect impressions of Swedenborg upon the less known and gifted of that period, but especially upon Lavater.

Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801) was the devoted pastor of his Zürich flock; but in his youth he had been in intimate contact with Goethe. His "Physiognomik" had created a mild sensation everywhere, and throughout his life Lavater remained active as a writer and religious poet.

In every discussion of Goethe's "storm and stress" period,

*Published in the October, 1917, issue of this Review; also, in revised form, in the *Germanic Review* of July, 1933.

the name "Lavater" appears. Together with Basedow, he was a companion of Goethe's on a trip along the Rhine in 1774. A short poem of four lines reminds one of that time:

Und, wie nach Emmaus, weiter gings
Mit Geist und Feuerschritten,
Prophete rechts, Prophete links,
*Das Weltkind in der Mitten.**

Goethe's interest in Lavater's "Physiognomik" was, for a while, very strong. The circle around Fräulein Klettenberg in Frankfurt, connected the two for some time. According to Janentzki,† Lavater's contribution to the "storm and stress" period was considerable. It should, therefore, be of some interest to find out in what way Lavater and Swedenborg were connected.

Among others, Lady Charlotte Blennerhasset, in an article entitled "Swedenborg" which appeared in the literary magazine "*Hochland*," November, 1908, pointed out the contact between Lavater and Swedenborg. In this article she writes:

> Inspired by the "Palingenesie" of the Genevan Bonnet, and by the writings of Swedenborg, J. K. Lavater published in 1768-73 his "Prospects into Eternity" (*Aussichten in die Ewigkeit*), and outlined a plan (which, however, he never carried out) for a poem describing the felicities of redeemed Christians. His Christian love, and his firm conviction of the connection of the present world with the hereafter, of the external with the internal, drew him powerfully into the sphere of the theology and into the world of ideas of the Swedish spirit-seer. His "Physiognomik," also, has relationship to Swedenborg's statement [that the face expresses the inner life of man].

In 1916 appeared the first profound investigation into Lavater's "storm and stress" period, by Christian Janentzki.

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*Prose translation: Like the three who walked to Emmaus, we proceeded with spirited and fiery steps, a prophet to my right, a prophet to my left, I, the universal spirit, in the middle.

†"Lavater's Sturm und Drang,"—"Storm and Stress," a period in German literature from 1770 to 1780, breaking with the traditional and prevalent form and material in literature, similar in effect to modern "expressionism." A youthful period of Goethe and Schiller, and of some minor lights.

He expresses a different opinion. In the third chapter, p. 65 he contends:

> That Goethe wishes him [Lavater] a thorough contact with the "honorable singer" (*ehrwüdiger Sänger*)* of our times,—according to the discoveries of Max Morris this means Swedenborg,—testifies that there is very little probability of an influence of the "Arcana" upon the *"Aussichten."*

In the "Documents Concerning Swedenborg" by R. L. Tafel, one may find the following reference (note 186):

> This publication [namely, Lavater's *"Schweizerlieder"* (Swiss Songs)] was succeeded by a more extensive poetical work, entitled "Prospects into Eternity" (*Aussichten in die Ewigkeit*), on which he desired to have Swedenborg's opinion, and of which he wrote him, he "would diligently send him a copy, or, if he pleased, translate the principal parts into Latin." (See Doc. 236.) . . . Dr. Immanuel Tafel says in his edition of the Documents, p. 417: "Whether Swedenborg replied to Lavater's letter is not known . . . But that Lavater was an apt student of his writings is proved by dissertation on the Lord and the Doctrine of Atonement in his posthumous writings, which are composed altogether in Swedenborg's spirit." That Swedenborg corresponded with Lavater is, however, rendered evident by Oetinger's letter to Hartmann (Doc. 314, F); for on September 9, 1771, Oetinger wrote that "Swedenborg intended to visit Lavater"; and under date of September 19 he said that "on his way to Switzerland Swedenborg would pass through Stuttgart and Tübingen."†

In the magazine, *The New Jerusalem Journal,* London, 1792, pp. 266-268, is printed the following incident (here translated from the German *Zur Geschichte der Neuen Kirche,* "Pertaining to the History of the New Church," by Dr. Im. Tafel, Tübingen, 1841, pp. 104-106), which in much shortened form may be given like this:

> Since the famous Physiognomician and theologian Johann Kaspar Lavater had once in a letter to me expressed the desire to receive a

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*This statement was proved erroneous. It should have read *"ehrwürdiger Seher,"* "honorable Seer."

†Swedenborg did not travel to Switzerland. He was in 1771 at The Hague, in Amsterdam, and then journeyed to London where he arrived in September, 1771.

picture of Swedenborg.* I took along a copy of the "Doctrine of the New Jerusalem," which as you know, has been published with a picture of him. In Zürich I spoke with Lavater concerning it, and before I left I sent him the copy. Later I heard from a common friend that Lavater mentioned to her that he thought the experiences of Swedenborg were indeed possible. I regretted that I had not brought up the subject myself. (Signed) C. V. J."

We see from these few evidences that Lavater, beyond doubt, had occupied himself with the writings of Swedenborg, and furthermore that he had had a genuine interest in the man himself. If we can fix the years in which this was the case, we shall be able to pronounce upon the possible influence of Swedenborg upon Lavater.

The most significant clews in this matter are two letters of Lavater's to Swedenborg, one in 1768 and the other in 1769. If we notice that the first of these letters appeared in August, 1768, we see definite possibilities of relationship.

These letters were written in Latin, as proved by the footnote:

The English translation constituting the above document appeared first in the *New Jerusalem Magazine* of 1790, p. 179, the editors of which state that the Latin original was then in their possession. It was afterwards introduced into the English and American editions of the Swedenborg Documents.

The first letter in the "Documents concerning Swedenborg" (Doc. 236) reads as follows:

I doubt not but that you are often troubled with letters from foreigners with whom you are unacquainted, and as you are much engaged in meditation, business, travel, and the company of persons of renown, you will probably consider the present application from an unknown Swiss as trifling and impertinent. Yet knowing that so great a man is my contemporary, I cannot help inquiring of him a few things which seem to me to be of the greatest importance; as I know of no person in the world but yourself (*who have given proofs of an extraordinary and almost divine knowledge* [italics mine]) capable of solving my questions, I will, therefore, take the

*This picture is in *Geschichte der Deutschen Literatur,* by Paul Wiegler, p. 481; Physiognomy of Swedenborg, dated March 29, 1792. Comment: honest, pious face, formed to be a spirit-seer.

liberty of proposing them, trusting that you will condescend to satisfy me therein as soon as possible.

I. I have been engaged these three years heart and soul in writing a poem on the future happiness of Christians, and have written lately several letters particularly to Zimmermann in Hanover, the present celebrated physician of the King of England, and my intimate friend, to the end that I might collect the opinions of the wise and learned, before I publish the poem itself. I most fervently wish to have your opinion also, which would be of great use to me; but I do not know whether you are conversant with the German language; I would willingly send you a copy, or if you please, translate the principal parts into Latin.

II. . . . [Question on account of faith-healing of a girl in Stockholm, is of no importance to this inquiry.]

III. As I have heard and *read* [italics mine] much of your familiar converse with the spirits of the deceased, may I be permitted, most respected man, to propose to you some questions, from a mind sincere and filled with respect for you, by the solution of which I may be convinced concerning those almost incredible reports.

1. My friend, Felix Hesse, died March 3, 1768,—whether he will appear to me, while I am living, and when, and in what manner?—whether he will reveal to me anything respecting the happiness of those in heaven, or concerning my ecclesiastical destination on earth?

N.B. I fervently desired him before his death to comply with my request if possible.

2. . . . [Another unimportant question.]

3. Shall I ever be so happy as to converse with angels or spirits of the deceased without any false fanaticism, and without disobedience to the commandment of God not to interrogate the dead; and by what manner of life, or by what virtues I can arrive at so high a privilege?

IV. Whether the dream I had on June 9th this year proceeded from Felix Hess?

Be not angry, thou most excellent and learned man, with a very studious disciple of the truth, who will neither be rashly credulous, nor a disbeliever, but who has an open breast, ready to receive from his inmost soul whatever truth beams forth. Farewell; do not suffer me long to wait in vain for an answer.

May God and Christ to whom we both belong, whether living or dead, be with you,

John Caspar Lavater
of Zürich
Minister of the Word of God

Zürich in Switzerland,
August 24, 1768

On September 24, 1769, Lavater sent another letter, substantially reiterating his first, couched in the fulsome terms of his times, extolling Swedenborg, and begging him to answer. Some of the choice phrases (clearly indicating the prevalent "storm and stress" emotional temperament) are:

I adore the wonderful gifts which you have received from our God. I adore the wisdom which shines forth from your writings. If it's true what is told of you, God will show you that I only try in the simplicity of my heart to get in communication with you. . . . I have written somewhat concerning the Eternal Bliss. O! that I could exchange letters with you on this subject! Or better yet, that I could converse with you!

I add one pamphlet. You should know my soul! I beg you for only one thing, you divinely inspired man! I adjure you by the living God not to refuse it!

This effusive letter concerns his friend Felix Hess, with regard to whose whereabouts and doings in the spiritual world Lavater wishes information. He closes it with the moving appeal:

I am your brother in Christ, answer very soon, as an honest brother. Answer it in such a way that I may see what I now believe on the testimony of others.

Christ to whom we belong, alive or dying, be with us!
Zürich, in Switzerland, Sept. 24, 1769

Johann Caspar Lavater
Diaconus at the Orphanage.

No replies from Swedenborg to these letters have been found to date. There is still a mass of unpublished correspondence in the Lavater Archives in Zürich, however, so that hope cannot be altogether abandoned. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that Swedenborg answered the youthful *Stürmer und Dränger,* thinking of the adage: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

It is well known that Swedenborg persistently refused to be used as a medium. One striking instance is the firm reply he gave Klopstock on the occasion of the latter's visit to him in Copenhagen. On Swedenborg's saying that not even a prince could compel him to act as a medium, Klopstock answered in the tone of a hurt person: "I see, when one is

not a prince, one's friends may be in the other world or not; Sir Swedenborg pays no attention to them." Thereupon he rushed away. (See Klopstock's *Sämmtliche Werke,* Schmidlin, 1839, p. 357 ff.)

In all probability Lavater was also deeply disappointed. He whom he has petitioned in his youthful enthusiasm to give convincing proofs of his gifts, and to testify to the correctness of some of the conclusions made in the *"Aussichten,"* remained silent. The reason for Swedenborg's silence was doubtless that all material that he wished to publish had already been published in the *"Arcana Coelestia"* (1749-1756), *"De Caelo et Inferno"* (1758) and *"Amor Conjugialis"* (1768). No other proofs would avail, if the published data did not carry the stamp of truth.

Lavater knew, however, of other sources. In the eighth letter of the "Prospects into Eternity" (vol. 5, p. 217, of *Ausgewählte Schriften,* Zürich, 1844, Orelli), Lavater writes under date of February 15, 1772:

> The other example is that which Mr. Kant of Königsberg,—you would not call him a dull head,—narrates concerning a vision which Emanuel Swedenborg saw in Gothenburg of a fire in Stockholm, and told a gathering [while the fire was in progress].*

Under the date of February 6, 1785, in *"Fragen und Briefe weiser und guter Menschen"* (Questions and Letters of Wise and Good People), Lavater dedicates a whole paragraph to Swedenborg, as follows:

> XI. SWEDENBORG.—I should like to express myself thoroughly concerning what I think about Swedenborg, if I had time enough, and if that which I read of him some time ago were still clearly in mind. But here is a little for the much.
>
> I believe he is a sincere and true seer.† It is, or it seems, impos-

*"*Träume eines Geistersehers,"* by Immanuel Kant, 1766, pt. II, ch. 1. English translation, "Dreams of a Spirit-Seer," (1st ed.) London,—Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1900; (2nd ed.) London,—New-Church Press, 1915.

†In the original German, "seer" is rendered "Divinator." By "divinator" one understood somebody who had knowledge of things that were not perceptible to the senses of the physical body, a revelator.

sible that everything narrated of him and by him, is pure fiction, mere accident, or a falsification, or fraud. That is to say: I, writer of these lines, would condemn all impressions of all that I have read or heard of this man, if I should regard him as a fraudulent man, or a speaker of untruths, or a writer of lies. I should judge him in a manner too unnatural, hard-heartedly and unjust, if I should say: Vanity, sectarianism, love of the absurd, have seduced this man to speak lies

It may be that the power of seership (divination), implanted naturally in all men, but developed in but few, was awakened in Swedenborg by mediation. I prefer to say, by contact of the foreheads, or placing on of hands of certain spiritual beings.

But it does not follow therefrom that all that which Swedenborg saw was absolutely the *truth*. It was true for him. If he told us truly, and I almost cannot doubt this, he had certain visions; but these visions were adapted to his faculties.

When a seer becomes a prophet, then I think another divinely accredited prophet places his hands in formality upon him. His organ of seership is then so tuned that it can become the medium of enlightenment and determination of all analogous beings. Moreover, he will be authorized in a positive way. Swedenborg was not;* and it is peculiar that his pupils begin to hail him as something which he himself never claimed to be.

All of Swedenborg's ideas are therefore subject to the free examination of every individual. Every idea has, perhaps, for every individual a special worth which only he who examines it can realize for himself. Therefore I do not accept any idea from Swedenborg which is opposed to the complete system of the Gospels; but this does not mean that I regard him as an impostor on account of such ideas. He was possibly able to harmonize such ideas with the whole system of the Gospels, provided he knew this *"Totalsystem des Evangeliums."*

I regard his visions as his personal views of the universe, because he was a specially organized individual. I do not think of them as

*Lavater's knowledge seems to have been limited to the reading of the *"Arcana Cœlestia."* In 1772 Swedenborg wrote plainly that "the Lord manifested Himself before me, His servant, and sent me to this office; that He afterward opened the eyes of my spirit and thus introduced me into the spiritual world and granted me to see the heavens and the hells, and to talk with angels and spirits, and this now continuously for years, I affirm in truth." Swedenborg's office was to "receive the doctrines of the New Church, which is the New Jerusalem, in his understanding, and publish them by the press." (True Christian Religion, n. 779.)

oracles. His visions I accept as true only insofar as they are easily fitted into my system of all my proven experiences and intuitions.

Some time later (between April and May, 1791, in vol. V., p. 266, of *Ausg. Werke*) Lavater writes:

I miss in Swedenborg's visions, which I regard as true visions (!) of a limited but erudite spirit, apostolic simplicity, and dignity. I miss greatness and manifoldedness of ideas. He was so organized that he could see the middle world of spirits many times, but without one great, genius-like *coup d'oeil.** His spirits are as cold as he and his physiognomy.

Lavater could never understand the coolness of Swedenborg in regard to petitions to give messages to living people from their departed friends and relatives. I believe that Lavater never could forgive Swedenborg for his silence upon the two fervent letters written by the youthful pastor. Furthermore, Lavater's own temperament was fiery, poetical, and forward pressing, while Swedenborg's was retiring and deliberate, though friendly.

In his *"Handbibliothek,"* approximately between August and November, 1791, Lavater speaks his mind on Swedenborg for the last time. By that time the activities of the Swedenborg Societies† had become apparent. To them the following paragraph relates:

The belief in Swedenborg as an apostle, as a reformer of the apostles, gains rapidly. Therefore it is important that a man like you (?), who thinks so healthily, who knows Swedenborg as few know him, who is not touched by a breath of the antichristian atmosphere of the world, should discover the first falsity upon which the belief that Swedenborg is a new apostle rests. . . .

The first falsity of which Lavater thinks, I believe to be the same reason that he advances against Swedenborg's prophethood in the quotation "XI. Swedenborg" above.

Lavater's initial and extraordinary enthusiasm over Swedenborg's gifts had quickly evaporated, and had turned into

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*Lavater apparently knew nothing of the book "Heaven and Its Wonders, and Hell."

†The Exegetical and Philanthropical Society, of Stockholm, f. 1786, and the British Society for the Propagation of the Doctrines of the New Church, f. 1783, were active.

a cool and indifferent judgment of them. Of course, he never denied that there was, without doubt, a goodly amount of truth in that which Swedenborg reported he had heard and seen. But Lavater took little of that material *"in corpore"* over into his *"Aussichten in die Ewigkeit."* This treatise was built synthetically upon the theories of Bonnet: "Bonnet is the father of my poem." Goethe justly finds fault with Lavater that he has rested his contentions too largely upon his own reasoning, and has neglected the material in Swedenborg. We adduce here the proof in form of a critical estimate of Lavater's book by Goethe in the *"Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen,"* 1773, N. 25, p. 56, *Cotta Jubiläums Ausgabe, Goethes Werke,* Band 36. (Translation *"Aussichten in die Ewigkeit,"* in Letters to Zimmermann, third and last volume, Zürich, 1773, 8, 342 pp.)

It was always the case, and natural, that he who hungered and thirsted after eternity, prepared such food in his imaginations as satisfied his tongue and as his stomach could digest. The soft Oriental cushioned his paradise with a well decorated table, under evergreen trees, from which the fruits of Life hung down for the elect and their eternally virgin wives.

The valiant Nordic surveys, in front of Asgard, in the depths of heaven, his unlimited battle field, a desired place for the exercise of his indestructible strength, and then rests besides Father Odin, enjoying his glass of beer with the appetite of a hero. The erudite theologian and world-teacher hopes to find there an academy in which he can enlarge his knowledge and understanding by eternal research and unlimited experiments.

Excuse us, Mr. Lavater, when we regard your plan, which you yourself regard as a very general and universal one, only as special and presumably most special.*

In the first part, p. 23, he explains that he dedicates his poem to the thinking and scholarly fraction of humanity, but especially to Christians. Until now he has kept his word, and has opened vistas only for the reflective and erudite man. At least he has taken care of these in a special way. They stand in front; and Newton and Leibnitz are preferred to the common citizen and the farmer. We are inclined to believe that one of that family was organizer of the heavenly government. . . .

*It strikes one almost as ironical to see Goethe criticize Lavater for precisely the same thing for which Lavater criticizes Swedenborg.

A few words more as to the expected poem. Had Mr. Lavater felt himself called to be a seer, or a singer for the feeling part of mankind, he would have failed in writing these letters; he would never have written them. He should have felt for all. The power coming forth out of his heart would have taken all with him. But he acted as a thinker for thinkers. As such he produced a satisfactory work. So he varied points of view, removed doubts. We do not know whether he succeeded.

He remained true to his old plan, also to his opinions, in spite of all criticism. But it seems to us, he would have done better, had he gone right to poetic expression and had dared what he must dare anyway.

We wish him luck in his undertaking. If he wants to hear advice we say this: that he has thought about this matter enough already. Now let his soul lift herself up, and look upon this accumulation of thoughts as upon earthly goods; and let her feel the spiritual world, and only in others his own self. Thereto we wish him communion with the *honorable seer of our times*, around whom was the bliss of heaven, to whom the spirit spoke through all senses and organs, in whose breast angels lived. His glory shine round about him, warm him through and through, so that he (Lavater) may feel once eternal bliss, and have an intuition what it is (compared with the stammering of the prophets) when secret messages fill the spirit.

Goethe's reference to Swedenborg here is unmistakable. It is a credit to the wisdom of Goethe, and evidence of his penetration of human nature, to see him showing in the very weaknesses of Lavater's work those things of which Lavater accuses Swedenborg.

Lavater replies to this (*Anmerkungen,* p. 321, vol. 36, *Goethe's Werke*):

The critical estimate of the third part of the *"Aussichten"* in the *Frankfurter Anzeigen* I judge to be one of the best made. Without fail I shall make use of them as my memory permits. But I think that the critic has missed the purpose of these letters, and very much so. This is as clear as two times two is four.

Goethe's well-meant advice had come too late. Lavater never fulfilled his plan to write this poem. He became immersed in his tasks as pastor of his Zürich flock, and none of his later writings have plan or system. They are largely pastoral advice, remarks upon Christian life, and thoughts on his times. In some of his posthumous writings Lavater

substantially agrees with the system of Swedenborg, although he never acknowledged his contributions except as in the excerpts above. Dr. Immanuel Tafel believes that Lavater was in his later years, theologically speaking, a follower of Swedenborg. See this in *"Geschichte der Neuen Kirche"* (Contribution to the History of the New Church), p. 105, after a study of Lavater's "Fifteen Letters about Scriptural Doctrine of the Reconciliation with God through Christ" (Posthumous Works, Zürich, 1801, vol. 2, p. 1-108), and "Jesus Christ, the Same, not limited by Space and Time" (p. 109-220).

We cannot, now, establish beyond doubt whether or not Lavater read Swedenborg's "Arcana Cœlestia." If he did, it was before he wrote his first letter to Swedenborg, on August 24, 1768. He was at that time twenty-eight years of age. Presumably, by a study of the letters in the Lavater Archives, we could find out how Lavater was led to read Swedenborg, and when. Later he seems never to have read Swedenborg again. In his age he turned against those who claimed apostolic honors for Swedenborg.

We shall consider now the letters and opinions of contemporaries of Lavater and Swedenborg. In the ideas represented in these letters we may find the fine thread of influence into the inner memory of the man whence many of his opinions and decisions sprang.

Lavater carried on a correspondence, on a very large scale, with many famous literati of his time. Some ten thousand letters are preserved in the Lavater Archives in Zürich, Switzerland. It has been physically impossible for the present writer to look through these letters personally; but he hopes that some day it may be granted to him to search among them for evidence of Lavater's early interest in Swedenborg, and a consequent exchange of opinion with some of his friends. So far he can only adduce some letters that have a bearing on the case, since they come from people who exchanged letters with Lavater, while these letters themselves are addressed to other persons.

One of the correspondents of Lavater was Immanuel Kant, whose opinions concerning Swedenborg were set forth in 1766 in his *"Träume eines Geistersehers,"* which was translated into English under the title "Dreams of Spirit-Seer" by Emanuel Goerwitz, and edited, with an introduction and notes, by Frank Sewall (London: New-Church Press, 1915).

Another quite popular writer of that day was a friend of Kant, Johann Georg Hamann (1730-1788), a man of religious feelings who was called the Magus of the North on account of his deep and mysterious style. In his writings (publ. 1925 in Leipzig by Fr. Roth) we read the following, in a letter to the Army-councillor Scheffner (vol. VII, p. 178):

349. To the Kriegsrath Scheffner:

Königsberg, den 10tn Nov. 1784

. . . Reading the translation of Swedenborg does not give one any idea of the peculiarities of his Latin style which has really something "ghostly" in it. Like Kant, who subscribed at that time [when the "Arcana Cœlestia" was published] to all his works of phantasy [*Schwärmerei*], I overcame my mental resistance to read through the whole set of heavy quarto-volumes. Therein is such a repulsive tautology of terms and objects [*Begriffe und Sachen*] that I barely filled one sheet with notes that really meant something deep or paradoxical.

In Curland I found an older work of his, *"De Infinito,"* which was written entirely in the Wolffian-Scholastic style. I never saw any of his metallurgical writings, which are highly praised. I am wondering that not one of his numerous translators has collected data of his life,* and also that a man can reach a high old age in comparative health, when he is afflicted with a nervous disease. I recollect to have read that his visions were accompanied by real paroxysms. I explain to myself the whole miracle by a transcendental epilepsy, which dissolved in a critical foam, for that is his whole doctrine of the formation of the church [*Erscheinungslehre der Kirche*]. Unfortunately the best data of our souls come through dreams and diseases. Lavater reports . . . [here follows inconsequential material].

*Ed. Hamann is ignorant of the fact that H. W. Clemm had already in 1767 published a collection of documents concerning Swedenborg in his "Complete Introduction to Religion and Theology," Tübingen, 4 vols. See also Doc. II, preface p. VI and "Annals of the New Church," p. 84.

The critique of Hamann is justified to the extent that Swedenborg's writings do contain many repetitions. But so do those of many other philosophers who write in their own distinctive style. Hamann, like Lavater, overlooked altogether the main substance of the "Arcana Cœlestia." This is not the Memorabilia, the descriptions of the other world, but the exposition of the Spiritual Sense of Scripture as contained hidden within the Literal Sense. Swedenborg's own description of the content of this work is certainly the best criterion. It is contained in the title of the work: *"Arcana Coelestia, quae in Scriptura Sacra seu Verbo Domini sunt detecta"*—"Heavenly Secrets Which Are in the Sacred Scriptures or the Word of the Lord, now disclosed." Strange to say, neither Lavater, nor Hamann, Kant, Goethe or any other of the literati, paid any attention to this content of the "Arcana." All were merely interested in the "sensational" aspect of his experiences, and therefore they thought of Swedenborg merely as a "spirit-seer."

Goethe's friend from the Strassburger time, J. R. Lenz, also evinced interest in Swedenborg's "things heard and seen." We read in a letter to Goethe (*Briefe* to and from J. M. R. Lenz, publ. K. F. and W. Stammler, Leipzig, 1918, done by Kurt Wolff, vol. II/31; N. 222):

Sept. 1776

. . . I write this to you before going to bed, because I do not find time during the day. To describe to you all the fairy moods in which I live now, would necessitate my being more of a poet than I am. However, what shall I tell thee,—that if Swedenborg is not a faker, thou must have felt, envisioned and interiorly heard all these things. I, for my part, have not missed all the rules and magic formulas to call absent spirits into my circle. If thou hast not heard, it is not my fault. . . .

Another group which became interested in Swedenborg was that gathered around Frl. Klettenberg, who corresponded with Lavater during the year 1774.

H. Funck publishes in his book "The Beautiful Soul; Confessions of Susanna Katharina Klettenberg" (Inselverlag, 1911), a letter from her (N. 14): *An Hans Kaspar Lavater, am 9ten Jenner 1774.*

. . . I put down the third part of your *"Aussichten in die Ewigkeit,"* and take my pen to describe to you at once the joy, the delights almost indescribable, which penetrated my soul when I read the 17th, 18th and 19th letters . .

Inspired by Lavater's *"Aussichten,"* very likely also by Oetinger's translation of Swedenborg's *"De Coelo et Gaudio Coelesti,"* Frl. Klettenberg wrote an essay "My Outlook into Eternity," of which Lavater and Tscheko possessed a copy. (Not found in her estate. See also *Schriften der Goethe Gesellschaft, XVI* — 1901 — 289, 290; Goethe *Jahrbuch* XXVII, 1906/113.) Funck does not think it possible that a manuscript "Of Heaven and Heavenly Joy" can be attributed to her. He writes in Note 308:

. . . I did not include in "The Beautiful Soul" a manuscript published by Lappenberg (Reliquies of Frl. S. K. Klettenberg, 1849, p. 95 ff. and 217 ff.) erroneously held to be hers. [Goethe Jahrbuch XXI, 1900, 281 f. 16, Concerning the essay: Of Heaven and Heavenly Joy, G. F. Fuchs.] It has been recently shown that this is a word for word copy of Oetinger's translation of Swedenborg's *"De Coelo et Gaudio Cœlesti."* It is impossible that this manuscript should come from the posthumous papers of our Frl. Klettenberg, because that translation of Oetinger's, of which it is a copy, did not appear until two years after her death, in 1776.

On this I wish to remark that Fuchs wrote in his article:

He [namely, Oetinger] published this work in German under the title, "Emanuel Swedenborg's Selected Writings" (part IV, p. 191 ff.) (Frankfurt am Main, to be found at Commercienrath Daniel Christian Hechtel, 1776)."

Funck has been led by this date to conclude erroneously that Frl. Klettenberg never saw this translation. Yet Fuchs shows that

Oetinger had connection from 1730 (!) with the *Brüdergemeinde Zinsendorf,* lived for some time in Herrnhut and Frankfurt, and certainly would have made the acquaintance of the pious circle around Frl. Klettenberg.

Apart from this, it is obvious from the Autobiography of Oetinger (Doc. 314) that he included the Memorabilia of the "Arcana" in "Swedenborg and Other Heavenly and Earthly Philosophy," which pamphlet appeared in Frankfurt in 1765. (See "Annals of the New Church," p. 76, Oetinger,

F. C.; also *"Zur Geschicte der Neuen Kirche,"* Tafel, Tübingen, 1841). In this pamphlet there is a translation of the *Mirabilia* occurring between the chapters of the "Arcana." There is no reason to doubt that Frl. Klettenberg was in the possession of a copy of this pamphlet. Moreover, in 1771 Oetinger published "Estimate of the Doctrine of the State after Death and related Doctrines of the famous Em. Swedenborg." Oetinger's translation was totally condemned in Ernesti's *"Neue Theol. Bibliothek."* Unpleasant attention was thus drawn to this pamphlet, and the Government of Württemberg confiscated the whole issue. I presume that copies, like that belonging to Frl. Klettenberg, were highly prized. How far, however, Frl. Klettenberg went in transmitting any of this knowledge to Lavater is beyond my power to ascertain.

Another author has dealt with the problem of Swedenborg in favorable fashion. This was Matthias Claudius. In 1772, the year of Swedenborg's death, he published in his family journal, *"Der Wandsbecker Bote,"* the following review (text from edition of Dr. Adler, Matthias Claudius Works, Utopia Verlag, Weimar, 1924, p. 108):

"Mr. Swedenborg is known to many readers only from his last years on earth and from his last writings. Presumably this has contributed to the quick judgment of him as an author and man. If they had been acquainted with his earlier life and writings [i.e., previous to the theological period], they would have followed him with searching and less flightly interest when he left the usual track. One would think that Mr. Polyhistor or Mr. Auditor would have held back their pronunciamentos, and suspected their own understanding him, if they had known that Swedenborg could have torn to bits the whole erudition of the Polyhistor and Mr. Auditor like baby shoes. . . .

[Here follows a biographical sketch of Swedenborg which follows the eulogy of Samuel Sandels, member of the Royal Academy of Sciences, spoken in the Hall of the House of Nobles in Stockholm, on October 7, 1772,—see Doc. 4.]

After Swedenborg had inspected and penetrated the sciences of the century, and had been eulogized by single experts and whole academies, he began to see spirits. His eulogist [Sandel] says: "He has taken the whole visible world and the relation of its parts as an

indication of the invisible. Since he was very well acquainted with the visible, he has made deductions as to the invisible, and in due time built up a whole system." If that be so, one can see clearly that, to people who know little of this and nothing of the other, or do not want to know anything of the other, the artificiality of the system would be too obvious, so that it would make the author more than ludicrous.

Nil Sacri Es, says Hercules, disgusted, as he sees a statue of Adonis in a temple. One does not find in the life and character of Swedenborg any such statue, for which he sought comfortable opinions in order to please. He was ever a very virtuous man, who was moved by the beauty and majesty of the visible world.

Whether or not Swedenborg really saw spirits or some other new things, or whether he was a fool, remains an open question. But one cannot well deny that there are spirits; and Swedenborg said quite coldly and dryly during his life, and on his deathbed in London, where he died on September 24, 1771 [correct date, 29th of March, 1772], that he could see them, and that he had seen them.

It is plain that the New World (America) existed before the Mr. Project-Maker Columbus sailed, no one knowing a thing of her in Europe. So there may also exist a way to see spirits, though one must first grind the lens for such vision. Suppose one should grind it, and then set out on this adventure. According to wise people, the truth lies always near by, but hidden; and therefore the projects of a good man struggling for this truth should be regarded sacred.

(The end you will find in the Elysian Fields.)*

Herder comes to a similar opinion. In "Aurora and Adrastea" (vol. 23, Herder's complete works, Suphan, 1885, p. 573, "6. Swedenborg," and vol. 27, p. 390, "91. Heaven and Hell") he treats of the psychological phenomena, and omits the philosophical and theological material, which he must have seen to be the main burden of Swedenborg's works.

Günther Jacobi, in his book *"Herder as Faustus"* (Leip-

*In the edition by Behrmann, Leipzig 1907, is the following end: "The *Wandsbeckker Bote* has the following conclusion: 'From all that one may conclude, that Herr Schwedenborg was at least an extraordinary man, and that the thirst after truth drove him more than once out of bed at midnight; we almost think, because according to the judgment of wise people much truth is still buried in the nearby, that this holy struggle, full of foreboding, after the truth, should not cause any rash denial.' "

zig, 1911) expresses the opinion that Herder was influenced in his youthful poems by Swedenborg. He says under *"Herder and Swedenborg"* (p. 69):

At a time when Kant immersed himself in the secret science of Swedenborg ("Arcana Cœlestia," heavenly secret in the sense of known to heavenly beings, angels, not yet known to earthly men), to write shortly afterwards the "Dreams of a Spirit-Seer, explained by Dreams of Metaphysics," Herder was studying in Königsberg. As a young friend and admirer he communicated frequently with Kant. Kant had procured the expensive work (the "Arcana"). No doubt, Herder, who did not let anything exciting pass by him (his friends in Königsberg called him the "Perambulating Library"), also, through the instrumentality of Kant, dove into Swedenborg's "Arcana Cœlestia."

However it be, the Königsberg poems and his use of words till way into the 70's and 80's of the eighteenth century, testify to a close acquaintance with the Swedish seer. Those poems will be shown later. A personal knowledge of Swedenborg's writings is borne out by the following facts: namely, that Herder reviewed the pamphlet of Kant (Dreams of a Spirit-Seer); that he speaks like an expert on Swedenborg in his own writings in the 70's; that even the "Metacritique" carries the same tone; and that the *Adrastea* in 1802 deals with Swedenborg in an extended article which emphasizes the psychological origin of Swedenborg's visions.

Among the poems referred to are *"Der Genius der Zukunft," "An die Mitternacht," "Mitternachtsgesicht meines Genius."* Jacobi deals further with this question on pp. 90 ff. and 115 ff. of his book. Recently another connection has been discovered which relates Lavater with the mystic Elisa v. Recke. (See The Germanic Review, January, 1932, vol. VII/1: "The Correspondence of Lavater with Elisa von der Recke; Newly discovered Originals by Martin Schütze.")

Dresden, March 13, 1832

I have found among my letters a few early letters of Lavater. Since my earliest childhood I was disposed toward mystic and secret societies. My noble father (von Medem, Kurland) and his excellent brother had been educated by a mystic, and I strained my ears when my relatives spoke of Swedenborg. I also wished to come in contact with spirits . . .

Without doubt, a close scrutiny of all letters by Lavater

would bring to light many more witnesses which would be of invaluable assistance in this undertaking. However, we must leave it to the future, when the archives in Zürich may be available for such investigation.

Lavater could not approach the wideflung field of an existence after bodily death without touching that sphere of investigation which is known today as Psychical Research Hallucinations, visions, auditions, premonitions, dreams, and the like, give us a more or less definite knowledge of a marginal state of consciousness, neither fully sensuous nor fully spiritual. Lavater probed into this field in his initial effort to determine the quality and extent of a life after death. In a letter, the 13th of his *"Aussichten"* (4th ed., Zürich, 1782, p. 102) he writes:

> And what shall I say here of the power of premonition; that is, of the power of the soul to represent to itself absent persons and distant events according to their true nature?
>
> Of all more or less reliable stories of this kind I shall mention a few. A natural scientist, a scholar of renown, told me that his own absent father had appeared in two different places, in his native country, almost at the same time. He opened the door of a room, clad in his robe and sleeping cap, appearing alive, and looking with a pale face at those present. Soon he disappeared again. Both parties, having seen him, made known this fact to each other, and presently found out that at that time he was in danger of death on the high seas, and was much worried on account of his family.

The other example is this:

> Here Lavater mentions the well known story of Swedenborg's vision of the fire in Stockholm, during a banquet in Gothenburg. This may be taken as another evidence that Lavater believed in the veracity of Swedenborg's experiences, at least to such an extent as to incorporate them in his discussion of extra-sensuous experiences.

In Lavater's discussions of some prospects into eternity, two forces struggle with each other, unlike anything in Swedenborg's writings. Lavater seeks on one hand to remain strictly within the bounds of a rational method to avoid the pitfalls of imaginations, day-dreams, and poetical-ecstatic hopes. On the other hand, he cannot completely cast off the orthodox teachings of his church; and he believes im-

plicitly and verbally the Scripture where it speaks of death and resurrection. Swedenborg is free from the fetters of any church teaching. He is better equipped philosophically and rationally to construct a solid system. So Lavater is handicapped from the start. However, we see attempts to bring order into the whole problem. Lavater begins by stating three sources from which he seeks to draw information as to life after death: 1. our own nature; 2. analogies; 3. especially, Holy Writ.

In letter 2 (always referring to the "*Aussichten in die Ewigkeit*") he says: "We are capable of thinking, willing and acting; three essential qualities of our nature. In a future life, we also shall think, will, and act." This, you will observe, is quite in the tenor of Swedenborg's teaching. Indeed in the "Arcana Cœlestia," nn. 3701 and 4247, we find the same thought expressed. More clearly, however, it may be found in "Heaven and Hell," n. 461 *et al.* In the effort to begin at the bottom, Lavater cites the basic qualities of the human soul which at any rate must survive in order to retain the essentials of human nature. In that respect Lavater can not err far. As he sees man here, so he will see man yonder. The analogy is perfect, if kept in the spiritual degree. Lavater also has an inkling of such relation as Swedenborg develops in the correspondences. He says:

> The second source [of information] I call "analogy"; and by that I understand the comparison of real things with possible ones, or real ones with real ones; or those together with real and possible ones together. This analogy may be in our own nature or in surrounding nature. From the consideration of the possibility of such things and situations spring many conjectures in regard to the future life. (Letter 2, p. 34.)

Here, we may say, is a germ-thought fertile enough to bring about such results as one may get without any such detailed and accurate method as Swedenborg's. As Swedenborg was far ahead in actual observations of human nature, undisguised by earthly conventionalities and masks, so he was superior to Lavater in his method of comparison. We

need not go any further in the elucidation of this point, since it can be found everywhere in the "Arcana."

Among such analogies as Lavater wished to utilize, was one which Bonnet mentioned ("Palingenesie XIV, p. 414); namely, the metamorphosis of the caterpillar into the butterfly (also used by Swedenborg in "Arcana," n. 3000).

I come now to the third source of ideas concerning the life of the future, the most reliable and the most prolific; I mean the collection of Sacred Scriptures. These contain either generally obvious conceptions, or metaphors, or examples and single traits (p. 37).

Again he touches the rim of that source of knowledge which Swedenborg penetrates to the core and utilizes widely; namely, the content of the Word of God, disclosed in the vessel of correspondences, representatives, and significatives. For instance, Lavater mentions the possibility of drawing out of the pictures and symbols of the biblical language a "theological sense." The metaphors of the "crowns on the heads of the saints," of the "pillar in the temple," can be recast into a thought concerning the majesty of the political power, of a victory over important obstacles, of virtue and blessedness. "This, my friend," he writes, "I mention merely as example, that the symbolic representations of the Scripture are a fruitful source of ideas in respect of a future life" (p. 41).

From the appearance of Elisha and Moses (on the Mt. of Transfiguration), he concludes that the saints in heaven possess a glorious figure, which can become visible to physical eyes and then invisible again. Among other conclusions he deduces that the glorified souls know each other personally, and he remarks, "You see, my friend, these are the sources out of which I shall draw ideas relating to the life beyond!"

However, Lavater is open to other ideas as well. He writes to Zimmermann (p. 42):

Watch that nothing unclear is mixed in. If you can, show me other writings, unknown to me now, which project new ideas, or which can make me change mine now, or at least can beautify them.

The sources mentioned were the ones which were open to a virtuous, pious gentleman of this class. However, having read Swedenborg, he should have been conscious of that of which Goethe reminded him in his critique:

> Now may his soul lift herself up and look upon this accumulation of thought, as upon earthly goods, and make her feel more deep the spiritual world (*Geisterall*), and only in others his own self. Thereto we wish him communion with the honorable seer of our times, around whom was the bliss of heaven . . . (See above in this essay.)

The question whether Lavater had ever been capable of having his spiritual eyes open (as he fervently desired, and so stated in a letter to Swedenborg, mentioned above in this essay) cannot be answered by anyone not having a complete knowledge of Lavater's internal man. However, it may be somewhat illuminating to make a comparison between certain initial visions of Swedenborg and similar marginal states which Lavater tells of himself.

We take the first from the diary of Swedenborg, written during his journey through Holland in 1744, March 24th to October 27th*:

> 51: At ten o'clock I went to bed and felt a little better. Half an hour afterwards I heard a noise beneath my head, and I then thought the tempter had departed. Immediately there came over me a powerful tremor, from the head and over the whole body, together with a resounding noise, and this occurred a number of times. . . .
>
> 90: In the state I was in, I came still further into the spirit, and although I was awake, I could not control myself, but there came, as it were, an overwhelming impulse to throw myself on my face and to fold my hands and to pray, as before, about my unworthiness, and to ask grace with the deepest humility and reverence, that I the greatest of sinners may receive forgiveness of sins. . . .
>
> 156: Afterwards in a vision, which was neither a state of sleep nor wakefulness, nor of ecstacy, it occurred to me. . . .
>
> 228: I was for a long time in holy tremors, though at the same time in deep sleep. I was wondering whether I were to see something holy, and it seemed that I was thrown on my face. I cannot affirm this for sure. The tremors continued, but I further saw nothing. . .

*Discovered by Gustaf E. Clemming, head librarian of the Royal

Lavater had similar, though much less definite experiences.

It happens to me quite often, I might say almost daily, that if I fall asleep with my thoughts somewhat concentrated, that I feel, in the moment of falling asleep, an extraordinary and indescribable happiness which is poured over my whole soul. She is then in the finest moral or intellectual activity. This activity is very regular, and at the same time inexplicably serene, that it distinguishes itself from all that which we call dream, even surpassing the liveliest imaginations of the body immeasurably. This state, which is for me either extremely elating or extremely depressing, lasts seldom longer than a second. In it are innumerable moral as well as metaphysical ideas which stream down upon me. It is followed always by a convulsive tremor which awakens me. That this state does not last longer than a second I know from various circumstances. Immediately after the awakening I am incapable of recalling one emotion or one idea. [Swedenborg could.] During this serene state I have not the least clear memory of my waking life. I have no picture of any person or of corporeal things around me. I feel myself in an entirely new existence of which I have as much recollection (of earthly things) as a blind man of colors. According to my feeling, I am in the invisible eternal world. My faults generally and abstractedly are very obvious to me; that is, I feel a disgust of myself, insofar as I am conscious that I acted against God's order. [Comp. *Drömmar* 71, 74.] Every time when I awake, there is in me the strongest desire to take one idea of this bliss into the earthly life. A deep pain accompanies the realization of this futility. (P. 139:41.)

We may come to the conclusion that Lavater had a marginal experience similar to what Swedenborg went through in his preparation for a far deeper and more significant opening of the spiritual world. Denied any further revealing to his own mind, he was naturally held at this initial position, and consequently refused to go very much further in a support of Swedenborg's claims. From what we have educed as evidence, it is clear that Lavater, in his attempt to describe the eternal world, suffered from the worst shortcoming that could block any would-be Columbus; namely, the lack of personal experience. So he was limited to an acceptance or

Library in Stockholm. First edition in Swedish: *Swedenborg's Drömmar,* 1859. English: "Emanuel Swedenborg's Journal of Dreams and Spiritual Experiences in the year 1744," translated by Rev. C. TH. Odhner, Bryn Athyn, 1918.

a rejection of what he read or heard of the other, more fortunate than himself.

In the *"Aussichten"* no direct use of Swedenborg's full and prolonged sojourn in the World of Spirits, and in the depths of the Heavens, has been made by Lavater. There are many parallels in striking conclusions. There are plain reasonings which merely say by logic what Swedenborg sees by the power of the spiritual mind. There are comforting hopes, many surprising happy intuitions, yet the full and solid substance is denied to the poet-pastor.

While Swedenborg retired more and more from the affairs of this world, and lived for the publications of his Writings, the Zürich minister stood in the midst of his flock in the troublesome times of the Napoleonic wars, until the bullet of a French soldier hit him in the effort to stave off cruelty, and was instrumental in releasing his soul to those fields for which he prepared himself in his *"Aussichten."* Perhaps then it was given him to meet the greater master, and converse with him freely on those things which the Swiss youth desired fervently to know. No doubt his own "prospects into eternity" are now much clearer and more lasting than they ever were in the turbulent days of "Storm and Stress," at times in poetry, at times in life, at times in the church.

Othmar Tobisch.

WHAT THE NEW CHURCH TEACHES CONCERNING LITTLE CHILDREN.

By Miss Lilybell Bates.

WE know that we were all born evil. Swedenborg says:*

I have discoursed with angels concerning infants, whether they are pure from evils, inasmuch as they have committed no actual evil, like the adult; but it was given me to understand that they are alike in evil, yea, that they are nothing but evil, nevertheless that they, like all the angels, are withheld from evil, and preserved in good by the Lord, and this in such a sort, that it appears to them as if they were in good of and from themselves. (Arcana Cœlestia, n. 2307.)

If we were left to ourselves we would rush into evils, as soon as we grew old enough to make the choice. We are selfish and self-seeking, born with the love of the world and all the good things in it—from our earthly inheritance. It is because the Lord holds us from these things and provides guardian angels to hold the hells back from us that we can be saved.

With those who by undergoing temptations become regenerated, remains are necessary, that the attendant angels may thence bring forth what is required for their defence against the evil spirits, who assault man by exciting his falses. (A., n. 737.)

When a new soul is formed, the Lord puts off from Himself something of His own substance, but puts it off in such a way that it shall have an entity of its own, be able to choose between good and evil, and so learn to love the Lord "as of himself." Otherwise we should be machines. When the new soul has been started, the high-

*This paper sets forth certain teachings of the New Church mainly by copious quotations from Swedenborg, taken either from "Arcana Cœlestia" (indicated by A.) or from "Heaven and Hell" (indicated by H.). Omissions within the quotations are not indicated.

est celestial angels are given charge of it, and through them the Lord infuses into it the love of what is good and true. This Swedenborg calls "storing up remains."

Remains are all things relating to innocence, charity, and the truth of faith which man from infancy has had of the Lord, and has learnt; all and each of these things are laid up in store, and in case man was not possessed of them, it would be impossible for anything of innocence, of charity, and of mercy to be in his thoughts and actions, consequently there could be nothing of goodness and truth therein, and hence he would be worse than the savage beasts. (A., n. 661.)

If parents are not trying to live the regenerate life, it is very hard for the children to come into that state. All the early story of the life of mankind shows the decline from generation to generation, until the Lord had to come into the world to put the hells into subjection and to show man how to overcome evils. It is the natural growth of childhood to come into the *proprium*. One must learn to choose "as of himself." But it is the part of parents and teachers to guard and help the angels in preserving and promoting as long as possible the states into which the love and innocence from the Lord can flow. At first this is easy. The baby is adorable. We feel the influence of the celestial angels even when we do not recognize it as such. We smile and make love-sounds and surround the child with what will and does serve as a medium for heavenly influences.

Man is called a living soul from the vital principle which is with him; for it would be impossible for anyone to live, and especially to live as a man, without some principle of vitality, that is, without a germ of innocence, charity, and mercy, or something thence derived of a similar nature, or at least emulous of being so. This germ of innocence, charity and mercy, man receives from the Lord during infancy and childhood, as may be seen from the states of infants and children. What man then receives is treasured up within him, and is called in the Word the remnant or remains, which are of the Lord alone with man, and furnish him with the capacity of becoming truly man on his arrival at adult age. That the states of innocence, charity, and mercy, which man passes through during infancy and childhood, enable him to become a man, is evident from this consideration, that, unlike the brutes, he is not

born into any exercise of life, but has all and everything to learn, and what he learns becomes by use habitual, and thus as it were natural to him. He cannot even walk or speak unless he be taught, and so with all the other actions, which habit renders as it were natural to him. (A., n. 1050.)

The fewer those remains are, the less capable is man of being enlightened as to things rational and scientific; for the light of goodness and truth enters by influx from the remains from the Lord: in case a man had no remains, he would not be a man. (A., n. 530.)

All these states are so preserved in man by the Lord, that there is not the smallest of them lost. . . . Every state of man, from his infancy even to extreme old age, not only remains in another life, but also returns, and in their return they are exactly such as they were during man's abode in this world; thus not only the goods and truths, as stored up in the memory, remain and return, but likewise all the states of innocence and charity; and when states of evil and of the false, or of wickedness and phantasy recur, which also, both generally and particularly as to every smallest circumstance, remain and return, then these latter states are attempered by the former through the Divine operation of the Lord; whence it may appear evident, that unless man had remains, he could not possibly avoid eternal condemnation. (A., n. 561.)

Everyone awakes in the other life just as he left this world. Old people are old, boys are boys, girls are girls, "and children who die are equally children." The old people grow young, and the children grow up to maturity.

[Children have] an infantile mind, innocence in ignorance, and a tenderness in all things; they are only in the rudiments of the capacity of becoming angels, for children are not angels, but become angels. . . . The state of infants exceeds the state of all others in this, that they are in innocence, and that evil is not yet rooted in them from actual life. Innocence also is such that all things of heaven may be implanted in it. (Heaven and Hell, n. 330.)

The state of little children in the other life is much better than their state in the world. They act at once according to their interiors. They walk without practice, and also speak, but at first from general affections. (H., n. 331.)

Little children as soon as they are raised up, which takes place immediately after death, are taken into heaven and delivered to angel women. The little children love them instinctively as their own mothers. All little children are under the immediate auspices of the Lord; and the heaven of innocence, which is the third heaven, flows in with them. (H., n. 332.)

How little children are educated in heaven shall be briefly told. From their nurse they learn to speak: their first speech is merely a sound of affection, which by degrees becomes more distinct, as ideas of thought enter. Into their affections, which all proceed from innocence, are first insinuated such things as appear before their eyes, and are delightful; and as these things are from a spiritual origin, the things of heaven flow into them at the same time, by means of which their interiors are opened, and thus they are daily perfected. (H., n. 334.)

Little children in heaven seem to themselves to have been born in heaven and for some time believe that the Lord is their father,—as indeed He is. (H., n. 345.)

The will in man is formed by the Lord, in the period from infancy to childhood: it is effected by the insinuation of innocence and charity towards his parents, nurses, and play-mates, and by many other things of which man is ignorant, and which are celestial things: unless these celestial things were first insinuated in man during infancy and childhood, he would by no means be in a capacity to become a man. Thus is formed the first plane. But as man is not man unless he be also endued with understanding, will alone not constituting man, but understanding with will; and as understanding cannot be procured except by sciences and knowledges; therefore, from the period of childhood, he is initiated in science and knowledge. Thus is formed the second plane. When the intellectual part is furnished with sciences and knowledges, especially with the knowledges of truth and goodness, then first man is in a capacity to be regenerated: and, during his regeneration, principles of truth and goodness from the Lord, are, by means of knowledges, implanted in the celestial things with which he was gifted by the Lord from infancy, so that his intellectual attainments form a one with his celestial. When these are thus conjoined by the Lord, he is gifted with charity, and begins to act from that principle as a principle of conscience. He thus receives new life, and this by degrees. The light of this new life is called wisdom, which then takes the first place, and is exalted above intelligence. Thus is formed the third plane. Man being rendered such in the life of the body, is continually perfected in the other life. Hence may appear what is the life of intelligence, and what is the life of wisdom. (A., n. 1555.)

Seeing how all children show, right from the beginning, individuality in character and temperament, we can easily realize the truth of the statement, "Children are of different

dispositions, some having that of the spiritual angels, and some that of the celestial angels" (H., n. 333). Knowing that the Lord has made each one of us for some particular work in the heavens—some work that no one but we can do, it is easy to believe that some must be of the intellectual variety and others forms of affection.

We have been thinking of infants who have been taken into the other world. We know that the world in which we live is a dim picture of heaven with its beautiful trees and gardens and flowers, its unspeakably lovely homes, its living, rainbow colors, its soft voices and radiant faces. The little child who comes into our world shows forth some of the peace and joy which is reflected from the attendant celestial angels. Their first attempts at self-expression are "sounds of affection, which by degrees become more distinct, as ideas of thought enter." They have the same "innocence in ignorance, and a like tenderness in all things"; and we sometimes feel sure that we can detect whether they are of the "spiritual angel" or the "celestial angel" variety. We know that the children here are "under the immediate auspices of the Lord," and that the celestial angels who under the Lord's guidance have been "storing up remains" are with them as much as they are with the little ones in heaven; only that the baby eyes here look out upon the natural world instead of the spiritual world; their eyes look into the loving eyes of their earthly mothers instead of into the angelic ones.

> Little children are instructed principally by representatives suited to their capacity. How beautiful these are and how full of wisdom from within, no one can believe. In this way intelligence is imparted to them, by degrees, which derives its soul from good. (H., n. 335.)

Two representatives of these "living," "moving pictures" are told to us; one which represented the Lord rising from the sepulchre, and at the same time the uniting of His Human with the Divine; the other representing "the descent of the Lord to the bound, and His ascent with the bound into heaven." (H., n. 335.)

We know that the Lord's life on earth shows forth and exemplifies all that can be experienced by any finite being. We read of the Lord's childhood that "as yet he was in an obscure state as to the knowledges of things celestial and spiritual. It is one thing to be under the influence of things celestial, and another thing to possess the knowledge of things celestial." (A., n. 1452.)

With the more fortunate earth-bound children the unfolding is, perhaps, quite similar to that of the earth-freed child. Of course, in the latter case the heavenly pictures are more beautiful, and the heavenly mothers more wise in the presentation of them; but the celestial angels still guard the tender soul of the earth child, even when the earthly mother is not wise.

The next step in the education in heaven, is to transfer the children "into another heaven, where they are instructed by masters, and so on." (H., n. 334.)

> There are some societies whose functions are to take care of infants; others whose functions are to instruct and educate them as they grow up; and others, who in like manner instruct and educate boys and girls who are of good disposition from education in the world, and come thence into heaven. (H., n. 391.)
>
> The spirits with man are changed according to the changes of his affections. In infancy spirits who are in innocence; in boyhood those who are in the affection for what is true and good; but in old age, spirits who are in wisdom and innocence. (H., n. 295.)

This, however, is where the education of children in the other world and in this begin to diverge. In the other world each and every object seems alive, "and thus in every idea of their thought there is life." (H., n. 338.) "Children on earth have nearly the same ideas when they are at their little plays." (H., n. 338.) Here again is the heavenly influx showing through; and as they are taught from the first in heaven that all life including their own is from the Lord alone, they have no temptation to think or feel otherwise. We have all seen children who show this conclusively in their play.

So much has been said of "self-expression" that one almost dreads to touch upon the subject. Freedom there must be; but freedom has been much misunderstood and perverted in this generation. The child must learn obedience, and this cannot be too early instilled into its mind. Can we reconcile obedience with freedom? We learn from the Writings that the churches of Adam and Noah represent our childhood; the childhood of the race and the childhood of the Lord after He had assumed the human. In this period we find that God gave the Ten Commandments; and the "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not," have no uncertain ring. From this alone, then, we can infer that there must be obedience.

> The first life [as it flows in from the Lord] manifests itself by obedience, which is the beginning of will; the second, by the affection of doing the truth, which is a progression of the will, and which exists when delight and blessedness are perceived in doing the truth. (A., n. 3870.)

Even the Lord had to learn obedience. Abraham represented the Lord as to His Divine Human; and it is said that "God tempted him," and we know that he did obey. We read that "it is in relation to temptation that obedience is predicated of the Lord in the Word." At the end of the Lord's earthly life He said: "Nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt;" and again a second time, "My Father, if this cup may not pass from Me except I drink it, *Thy will be done.*" (Matt., xxvi, 39-52.)

Every normal child, almost as soon as he comes into the world, shows this heaven-given tendency. But do we, for one moment, imagine that the child, growing up in heaven, is allowed his or her own way, or such self-expression as we see exhibited in our homes, on our streets, or in our Sunday schools? Oh, certainly not. Freedom of expression is not selfishness. While we must have freedom, it must not be expressed in this way. Who is wise enough today to teach children to grow up individuals but without selfishness?

One learns to love what one does, whether it be good or evil. If one forces oneself to do right, one comes to love the right. This, of course, is because one comes under the

guidance and influence of good spirits. Teach children to know that whatever thoughts come to them are incited either by evil or by good spirits, and half the battle is won. To quote again: "Man ought to force himself to do good, and to speak truth." (A., n. 1973.)

Respecting submission, it consists in a person's forcing or compelling himself. In compelling himself there is a principle of freedom, that is, a principle of spontaneity and willingness, whereby his compelling himself is distinguished from his being compelled. Without this principle of freedom, or of spontaneity and willingness, man cannot possibly be reformed, and receive any celestial proprium. Also in temptations there is more of freedom than out of temptations, although it appears otherwise; being in temptations, the principle of freedom becomes stronger in proportion to the assaults arising from evils and falsities, and is strengthened by the Lord, in order that man may be gifted with a celestial proprium; wherefore also in states of temptation the Lord is more present than in other states. The Lord never compels anyone, because he who is compelled to think what is true, and to do what is good, is not reformed, but then thinks what is false and wills what is evil still more than at other times. This is the consequence of all compulsion. The consciences of men do not suffer themselves to be compelled; and all mankind have a natural propensity to what is forbidden. During the course of regeneration, from the principle of freedom with which man is gifted by the Lord, he compels himself; and hence he receives a celestial proprium; which is afterwards gradually perfected by the Lord, and is rendered more and more free, till it becomes the affection of good, and of truth derived from good, and he has delight in it; in which delight, and in which affection, is angelic happiness. (A., n. 1947.)

The "servile liberty" received "from infernal spirits" causes men to imagine themselves to be in freedom, "but it is infernal freedom; the difference between which and heavenly freedom is, that the former is that of death, and draws them down to hell, whereas the latter, or heavenly freedom, is that of life, and raises them up to heaven." (A., n. 1947.) The Lord says, "Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin"; and "The truth shall make you free."

[In order that man may be in freedom,] the Lord places him in equilibrium between evils and goods, and between falses and truths; by evil spirits on one part, and by angels on the other. Man must

be in freedom, that he may be saved; and he ought, in freedom, to be drawn away from evil and led to good. Whatsoever is not done in freedom does not remain, because it is not appropriated. This freedom is a consequence of the equilibrium in which man is held. (A., n. 5982.)

The angels, by whom the Lord leads and protects man, are near the head; their office is to inspire charity and faith, to observe the direction of the man's delights, and to moderate and bend them to good, so far as the man's free-will permits. They are forbidden to act violently, and thereby to break man's lusts and principles, but are enjoined to act with gentleness; their office also is to rule the evil spirits who are from hell, which is effected by innumerable methods, of which it is allowed to mention only the following: when the evil spirits infuse evils and falses, the angels insinuate truths and goods, which, if not received, are yet the means of moderating; the infernal spirits are continually assaulting, and the angels affording protection; such is the order. The angels principally moderate the affections, for these constitute the life and freedom of man. The angels also observe whether any hells be open, which were not open previously, and extend their influx to man, as is the case when man brings himself into any new evil; these hells, so far as man permits, the angels close, and remove any spirits attempting to emerge from them; the angels also disperse foreign and new influxes, which might be productive of evil effects; and they especially call forth the goods and truths in man, and oppose them to the evils and falses which the evil spirits excite; hence man is in the midst, nor does he perceive the evil or the good, and because he is in the midst, he is free to turn himself either to the one or to the other. (A., n. 5992.)

May not we learn another lesson from this in the treatment of little children? Instead of arousing resistance in their minds by opposition, cannot we "infuse" an opposite good in place of the evil.

"When a child is first instructed, he is affected with the desire of knowing, at first not for any end manifest unto himself, but from a certain pleasure and delight connate therewith, and arising from other causes." Afterwards there is the "desire of knowing," the wish to "excel others," etc.; but when he is about to be regenerated, he is affected by the "pleasantness of truth," "the love of truth," and "afterwards from the love of good." (A., n. 3518.) Each state serves as a means to the next.

Scientifics are procured in childhood with no other end than that of knowing; and, with the Lord, they were procured from the delight and affection of truth. The scientifics which are procured in childhood are of several kinds, but they are disposed by the Lord in orderly arrangement, that they may serve to promote some use; first, by supplying the capacity of thinking, afterwards to be of use by means of thought, and lastly, that the use they point to may take effect, that is, that the very life of man may consist in use, and may be a life of use. These uses are accomplished by the scientifics which man imbibes in childhood; and without them the external man cannot be conjoined with the internal, and become together with it a form of use. (A., n. 1487.)

The Lord in his childhood, whilst he imbibed the things of science, at first knew no other than that they were for the intellectual man, or that he might draw from them the knowledge of truths; but that it was afterwards discovered that they were for the further end, viz., for his attainment to things celestial. In the course of man's instruction, there is a progression from scientifics to rational truths, next to intellectual truths, and lastly to celestial truths. If this progression be made from scientifics and rational truths to truths celestial without the mediation of intellectual truths, the celestial principle is violated; for there can be no connection of rational truths, which are derived from scientifics, with celestial truths, except by intellectual truths, which are the mediums of such connection. (A., n. 1495.)

Order requires that the celestial principle should flow into the spiritual, and adapt it to itself; that the spiritual principle should thus flow into the rational, and adapt it to itself; and that the rational should then flow into the scientific, and adapt it in like manner. But in the course of man's instruction in his childhood, such an order does indeed prevail, but it appears otherwise, viz., as if the progression were from scientifics to things celestial. The reason of this appearance is, because it is thus that the way is opened to things celestial, which are the inmost. All instruction is only an opening of the way; and as the way is opened, influx takes place according to this order. Celestial things continually present themselves ready for admission, and also prepare and form for themselves vessels, which are opened. [All these principles, Swedenborg tells us, are dead except for the "continual influx of interior life."] (A., n. 1495.)

Even in children the deeper the subjects the more ardently they desire to understand them, and all this is designed to bring the human being into a state where he may become spiritual, and at length celestial. It is with a view to this end, that the Lord insinuates also the delight which is perceived by children and young

persons in learning the sciences. But when man places his delight in mere science, he then removes himself from the celestial. (A., n. 1472.)

Infants and children are under the influence of things celestial more than adult persons, and of mutual love, and also of innocence. Adults have the knowledge of things celestial, and yet may not be under the influence of the celestial things of love. (A., n. 1453.)

Telling the child that he is good, calling attention to the things he does and says, making him "show off," creating self-conceit and self-consciousness, are what most infants have in the earlier years of their lives. After we have told a child for several years that he is the dearest, the sweetest, the most adorable thing on earth, how shall we make him understand that his proprium is just as evil as that of any of the inhabitants of hell? Will he accept this? No! We have implanted the other idea, which is acceptable to his self-love, too deeply. And yet, while he is the dearest thing on earth to us, the fact that his proprium is evil is the truth, which sooner or later he must face and acknowledge, if he is to come into the kingdom of heaven.

Why should we not begin as soon as he shows selfishness, disobedience, temper, greed, retaliation, to tell him that such feelings are induced by evil spirits, and must be driven away. When he does something sweet and kindly, why should he not know that there are angels suggesting these thoughts to his mind? We do not give the little children credit for being as keen and as receptive as they are. We wait until it is almost too late, before starting them on the heavenly road. Can we not realize from our own experiences how much we could save them from in the future by helping them to look at things from the standpoint of truth?

There is an external man, and there is an internal. The internal man is what ought to command, and the external is what ought to obey; and the external obeys when heaven and not the world, his neighbor and not himself, are regarded as ends, consequently when he looks at corporeal and worldly things as means, but not as ends; and he looks at them as means, and not as ends, when he loves his neighbor in preference to himself, and the things of heaven in preference to the things of the world. When this is the case, the

natural obeys; the natural is the same with the external man. (A., n. 5368.)

He who is in interior truth, knows that all truth and good is from the Lord, and also that all freedom grounded in the proprium, or in man himself, is infernal; for man, when he does or thinks any thing from his own proper freedom, does and thinks nothing but evil, in consequence whereof he is a servant of the devil, for all evil flows-in from hell: he is also sensible of delight in that freedom, because it agrees with the evil in which he is, and in which he was born. (A., n. 5763.)

It is further to be noted that the evil which enters into the thought does not hurt man, because evil is continually infused by spirits from hell, and is continually repelled by the angels; but when evil enters into the will, it then hurts, for in this case it comes forth into act as often as external bonds do not restrain it. Evil enters into the will by being detained in the thought, by consent, and especially by act and the delight thence derived. (A., n. 6204.)

The reason why evil is appropriated to man, is, because he believes and persuades himself that he thinks and does it from himself, thus he makes it his own. (A., n. 2606.)

We have noticed how everything in the other world progresses in orderly stages from infancy. Can we imagine that the fact that the Lord has made "one man for one woman" has been neglected in their instruction? That thought must be implanted very early in the minds of the next generation if we are to stem the tide which is at present running in the wrong direction. Marriage is a "holy institution." Can we make any of the present generation realize that fact?

We are told that when two people obtain a divorce it is quite possible for this act to throw both parties into a hell from which it is very difficult, sometimes impossible, to extricate them.

The enjoyments of marriage love advance to heaven, and the enjoyments of adultery to hell. The progress of the enjoyments of marriage love towards heaven was into states of blessedness and happiness continually more and more, till they become innumerable and ineffable; and as they advanced more interiorly into those that were more innumerable and more ineffable, they advanced even to the very states of blessedness and happiness of the inmost heaven, or of the heaven of innocence, and this through the most perfect freedom; for all freedom is from love, thus the most perfect free-

dom is from marriage love, which is heavenly love itself. But the progress of adultery was towards hell, and by degrees to the lowest, where there is nothing but what is direful and horrible. Such a lot awaits adulterers after their life in the world. By adulterers are meant those who perceive enjoyment in adulteries, and no enjoyment in marriages. (H., n. 386.)

All this may seem unrelated to childhood, but it is most important to implant it in the childish mind, and it must be inculcated at an early age, if the child life upon earth and subsequently in the world of spirits, is to develop in an orderly and heavenly manner.

Children love to hear the Bible read. We are told also about children in the other world, of how tender their understanding was when the Lord's prayer was said to them.

Probably things "celestial" make a very slight appeal to the present generation. That is for us to remedy. Can we teach them that the "light of intelligence regards the understanding; but the light of wisdom regards the will-part, or the life"?

Intelligence is not wisdom, but leads to wisdom; for to understand what is true and good is not to be true and good, but to be wise is to be so. (A., n. 1555.)

The Lord has given us, through Swedenborg, an abundent store of interesting truths, with beautiful pictures of the other life, and of the joys which we shall have, if we put away the evils which we find innate in us. Let us not miss the opportunity of storing up in the children who come under our influence all that they can receive, to help them in meeting wisely and strongly, the evil insinuations which they must meet as they come into their self-life.

There is an old couplet which goes something like this—

"Whoso feedeth a beggar feeds three,
Himself, his hungry neighbor, and Me."

Can we not hear the children crying from hunger—crying for the Living Bread? Perhaps the Lord has grown hungry, waiting for us to feed His lambs. Can we not hear Him saying to us older ones, "Children, have ye any meat?" (John, xxi, 5.)

LILYBELL BATES.

A PENTAD OF MIRACLES

The compiler of *Kings* at II *Kings* iv groups five miracles done at the hands of Elisha. All five are the kind of miracles which came characteristically from the hands of that prophet. Each was the means of doing a service. Elisha rescues the impoverished widow of a prophet from the penalties of indebtedness and increases her small store of oil to pay the creditors and to give her and her sons a living (verses 1-7). On behalf of the great lady at Shunem he petitions God for a child, which is born to her (verses 8-17). Years later, when the boy is struck lifeless by the heat of the harvest-fields, Elisha restores him to life (verses 18-37). During a famine he keeps the humble fare of a company of prophets from being thrown away—a poisonous gourd had been shred into the pottage—and with some meal makes it fit to eat (verses 38-41). Out of some slender first-fruits offered to him, he multiplies food for a hundred men and has some left over (verses 42-44). Selected from different periods in the prophet's activity (obviously the second and third miracles are separated by some years), these miracles are brought together as illustrations of the prophet's power and spirit of helpfulness. As we may see, they convey lessons beyond the compiler's own ken.

When in this pentad of miracles we seek the deeper meaning which the teachings of the Church ascribe to a number of Bible books, we do well to take account, first of all, of the spiritual sense in general of these two Books of *Kings*. These books must have their own place in that story of our religious experience which constitutes the spiritual sense of the Word. If we are to honor the principle of proceeding from the general to the particular, we should begin in a view, however summary, of the deeper meaning of the two books as a whole.

First and Second *Kings* are conspicuously marked with indications where their deeper meaning lies and to what experiences of ours it relates. With respect to the days of Elijah and Elisha at any rate, the story has to do with the period of the

divided monarchy in Israel, when Israel is torn in two and the people north and south are often engaged in civil war. Again, the Israelites are out in the great world as never before, making concessions to world-powers around them, and preyed upon by those powers until one of them overwhelms the Northern Kingdom with extinction and another carries the Southern into captivity. In the third place (to step outside the story for a moment, though not outside the period with which *Kings* has to do), we note that toward the last it is a period of prophetic activity—of interpretation, reflection, stern diagnosis of moral and spiritual condition. In the fourth place (returning into the books for their own story), we may fasten attention on a single thread of the history—the fortunes of the Temple with its treasures of silver and gold. For a while the Temple is the inspiring center of the people's religious life, then is supplanted for the North by shrines in that section, and finally is the object of foreign inroads, the chief prize at which the nations aim their demands for tribute.

Do not these large features of the history answer to leading aspects of a certain period and experience in our lives—the later middle years? Consider that in those years we first experience with poignancy the rift between our purposes and our knowledge, the clash between what we know of the things of the spirit and the actual life we live. Then it is that we are most realistically "out in the great world," aware of the strong influences hostile to the spiritual life, forced, we think, by the practicalities to make concessions to the world's way. In those years, too, we have reached long reflective moments, when we face ourselves, assess the drift from early life's idealistic outlook, bow to our disillusionments, and begin to wonder what soundness and health are to be found in us, and what help there is to restore us to strong, happy inner life. As the course of things in Israel during the four hundred years of the books of *Kings* can be summarized in the fortunes of the Temple, the course of things with us can be summed up around one item. It is the spiritual in us which has suffered in the course of the years. It is the spiritual which has been hurt by the

divergence between knowledge and practice, which has been beggared in the concessions to the world around us, and which has also troubled us to reflect and has inspired self-judgment. Youth's idealism and early manhood's brave and fresh efforts postpone these experiences, at least in the fulness in which they appear in the deeper meaning of *Kings*, until middle and later middle years. It is to experiences in the years when the shadow has moved perceptibly down the dial that the salient features of the story in *Kings* seem to point us.

Then it is to achievements and to surprising achievements of the Word of God in those years that the miracles of Elisha are speaking in their deeper meaning.

1. The Oil Augmented (verses 1-7).

In the years referred to we are often visited by a consciousness how perfunctory religion has become in our experience. It used to be eager, expectant. It glowed with life. Now we know our obligations, but that is just the difficulty. Our spiritual possibilities and standards once spelled enthusiasm, daring, privilege. Now they look like obligations which we are never going to meet. Life is going by and we are very far from being the sort of folks it once seemed possible to be. Staid respectabilities, careful conformity, an honorable self-compulsion to do the right—we may be able to lay claim to these, but they are an uninspired goodness. What has become of the spontaneity with which we once greeted the true and the high, those ardent motions of the spirit, that warm inner life which once seemed to be ours? The relic of the prophetic life is in sad straits in us.

There is something magnificent about the simplicity with which the Word of God enters this situation. It claims for itself our dwindling enthusiasm and our small store of love for the things of the spirit. It bids us look about for vessels into which to pour this slight spiritual zest. All about us are relationships with other people. Every relationship is a vessel into which to pour some understanding or sympathy or love. All around us are needs and causes awaiting understanding and

help. Each is a vessel into which to pour any affectionate interest which we feel in human life. Neither relationships nor causes are created or owned by us—at the most they are vessels we borrow. Let the spirit of the Word once set us to avail ourselves of them, and to pour into them the most meager store of humane insight or neighborly prompting, and that store increases and proves adequate for all the expression we can find for it. We and others find a wealth to live on. Perfunctorily met obligation, obligation which seemed too great for us, gives way to a renewed spontaneity of spirit. Where there was a religion of rote, there is now a mounting inspiration.

2. A Son Given (verses 8-17).

There is another complaint in the years we have in mind. Not only has the heart grown old and dispirited. A vision we wish we might have, is lacking. The understanding of life which religion once seemed to promise is not ours. Life was going to be something on which the light would shine steadily unto the perfect day, but the splendid vision of youth has faded, and our light is the light of common day.

The story in *Kings* gives many intimations how far our adult life has travelled away from the light of religion. Elijah is hard to find in the land; a King of Israel is unaware that there is a prophet in the land at all; Ahaziah, badly injured in falling from a window, sends anywhere but to Elijah to ask about the prospects of recovery; and in our present chapter Elisha passes the door of the Shunammite's home again and again before he is invited in. But finally he is asked in. The upper room which the great lady prepares for him is a picture of hospitality to truth. If religious truth is to be lodged with us there must be some basis in our own thinking for it to rest on—a bed for the prophet. There must be some mental exchange with truth—a table in the upper room. There must be a mind drawn up in attention and interest—a chair for the prophet. And it is vision, insight we seek—a lampstand in the upper room. "On a day" a sudden prompting extends a welcome to the truth of religion, as the influential woman at Shunem did to Elisha. Is

it possible to extend such a welcome without having the reward of hailing a prophet in the name of a prophet? There follows a new spirit, an altered mind. A new understanding of life is born in us.

3. The Son Revived (verses 18-37).

Even more characteristic of the middle years and of their spiritual experience is it to find that the understanding of life which the Word of God has given us has turned unliving, unreal. At the high noon of our interest in life, of reaping the good of our efforts, the tragic deadness happens. Convictions, hopes, a view of life to live for, and to live by,—they have just gone in the midst of life's weary onward plodding, but what will we not do to have them back, strong, lively! This threat of emptiness where there was so much satisfaction, comes in many forms and in the years when we talk of the "burden and heat of life." We used to have a real hold on Providence; guidance seemed real and sure. What has become of that grasp which was ours? We used to feel actually that life was something to account for to God. There is insensitiveness now. We had a realizing sense of many a spiritual reality. But those ways of thinking and feeling about life which religion and the Word gave us, are dead now. Why this glimpse of truth if it was only to die out? Were we deceived?

The Word has always reached those who mourn over these fine and real losses in life. There is nothing like God's concentration on each life. Elisha's stretching of himself over the lifeless body of the boy, mouth to his mouth, eyes to his eyes, hands on his hands, is nothing compared with that Divine concentration. In all the experience of which we have tried to give an idea above, it does not occur to us at the time that our own persistence is itself a form of the Divine concentration on us. Our mind is on what will happen in that upper chamber when the prophet stretches himself on the lifeless boy and revives him. But the road also matters. "Slacken not the driving" (verse 24). We seek first-hand experience of the power of the living Word, just as the Shunammite would not be put off with the prophet's representative. First-hand experi-

ence with the living Word's power alone will serve, just as Gehazi's ministrations were frustrate. No, our persistence matters; "drive and go forward." The Word is already carrying on its ministry in that persistence, and the new and fuller appreciation of the Word, the re-possession of our understanding of life, lies at the end of that persistence.

4. The Deadly Pottage Cured (verses 38-41).

The fourth of the miracles is readily told. A company of prophets in a time of famine is seated at a humble meal, a pottage, when their food is about to be swept from them by the appearance of a poison in it. With some meal, Elisha makes the dish wholesome again.

In youth we are quite sure where truth is and where falsity is—truth is truth and falsity is falsity. The early religious convictions are sheer things. We know that we can have the sheer truth about life. Infallibility is somewhere—within reach! Perfection is not impossible. In the middle years we are sadder and wiser men. High assurances of this kind have by that time been pretty badly treated. What a mixed thing life is, of the good and the bad, our own inner life included, our best imaginings, loftiest convictions, most laudable deeds. Here certainly is an adult consciousness, a mood of the later middle years. Mixed with the true is something false, with the virtue its attendant fault, with vision a bias, with belief unbelief, with the good deed a wretched self-regard. The dish was humble enough to begin with; now it is spoiled!

With what graciousness the Word of truth speaks to this disillusionment of the middle years! Or, rather, acts to give life wholesomeness for us still. It relaxes none of its demands; but these demands had not disregarded human capacity and nature in the first place. It knows how to exert a secret rectifying power. Through a saving good sense, a sound instinct, the preponderance of the good, it counteracts the harm of the imperfect and false. It inspires staunch purpose to reclaim and to do service despite imperfect counsel. In the biased view there is still an angle of vision on the truth which, with a right

spirit added, loses all harmful bias. The sternest integrity has often built on a conception of angry Deity; the mischief of that error, namely the suggestion that what is to be found in God is allowable in man, was despatched by a true fear of God. The living Word, appealed to, insinuates a saving influence. What deftness and secret power it has for making our imperfect knowledge, our inevitable misconceptions, serviceable and sustaining!

There are falsities which are accepted as truths when there is good in them. (Arcana Coelestia, n. 4736.)

Falsities with those in good of life become truths. (*Ib.*, n. 8149.)

5. The Barley and Corn Multiplied (verses 42-44).

We bring so little to the prophet in the total of our lives. No armfuls, no sheaves. A few first-fruits. At the most we have made but a few beginnings on the life eternal. This is one of the surest realizations of the striving life in the later middle years. At the last so little faith has been put by us in the great realities, there has been so little neighborly love in our handsomest living, in the depths of us there has been such a meager acquaintance with the God of whom we have heard—and spoken—so much. We have stood in peril successively in our lives of the perfunctory, of the sterile, then of despair that our life was gone out and religion was a delusion, then of the fatal sense of the imperfection of our best knowledge and effort, and now we are sharply conscious of spiritual shortcoming at nearly the eleventh hour.

The living Word still prosecutes its ministry of comfort and help. Religion looks up a long vista. The beginning of a harvest in life here will serve. It is only a modicum which the passing life is expected to achieve. Good that we come to the prophet with an offering of first-fruits! The slender offering will go far.

The rudiments of the wisdom implanted in (man) in the natural world grow to eternity. (True Christian Religion, n. 766e.)

A seed that serves Him shall be counted to the Lord for a generation. (*Psalm* xxii. 30.)

* * * * * *

In situation after situation in the middle years of life the

Word of truth does its kindly ministry. Whether the spirit of life and of living life eagerly in God's sight seems low; or the bright understanding of life which religion promised has not been realized; or religion has given understanding for a time, but it has failed; or the imperfection of our knowledge, the mixed character of our lives, makes us waver; or if the slight beginnings we have made seem inadequate; in each of these extreme moods the living Word has its ministries. It indefinitely multiplies the most meagre spiritual ardor by the opportunities it reveals for it to pour itself into; welcomed to the highest room in the mind, it brings new understanding of life; the understanding it has once conferred, it can revive if it dies; it exercises a secret rectifying power against our misconceptions even of itself; and it sees life whole and knows how to make slight beginnings redound to eternal life.

> Unless the Lord had been my help,
> My soul had soon dwelt in silence.
> If I say, 'My foot slippeth,'
> Thy mercy, O Lord, holdeth me up.
> When my cares are many within me,
> Thy comforts delight my soul.
> (*Psalm* xciv. 17-19 (J V).).

WILLIAM F. WUNSCH.

"THE INVISIBLE POLICE."*

The author of "The Wedding Garment" has given us in story form a striking picture of the experiences of people becoming conscious on the spiritual plane after passing through the portal of death. The story holds one's interest from beginning to end. The development is logical. The grasp of the course of events is sure. The spirit of helpfulness, strong, loving, and wise, is embodied in guides or advisers who are named by one of the characters in the narrative as the "invis-

**The Invisible Police.* By LOUIS PENDLETON. New York: The New-Church Press. 1932. 223 pp., 12mo. $1.25.

ible police," which term the author uses as the title to his story.

The reviewer is reminded of an experience observing immigrants transferring to a train in Jersey City nearly fifty years ago. They had with them their goods and chattels, huge boxes, heavy bags, bird cages, chickens. All ways of exit were carefully guarded except the one to the train. The train was parked on a side track. The immigrants were herded like cattle. Of course it was for their protection, but there were no kindly instructors to guide them. Strangers, in a strange land, they were known only by number. The conductor of the train simply looked in at the door to see that he had the right number of tickets. The cars were cleaned out as would be a cattle-car.

Very different is the reception given to new-comers on the spiritual plane by the "invisible police." No matter what their character the new-comers are treated kindly. But their character remains the same as it was in the world from which they came. Gradually, as they feel the restraints relaxing which had held them on the material plane, they manifest their true characters regardless of the consequences. The process of revelation of character is skillfully handled by the author. The story is very much up-to-date in names, attitudes, and views. The jacket on the book bears quotations from Swedenborg on elevating one's mind from thoughts dominated by space and time; and from Rabindranath Tagore on personality; also a very satisfactory "introduction" to the story, which we quote:

> This story begins with the destruction of an Atlantic liner in mid-ocean, and follows the fortunes, not of the saved, but of the "lost," after they disembark from a "phantom" ship in the land of the immortals—a land which, in its first stages, so closely resembles the life left behind on earth that many of those resurrected on the spiritual plane, who are in every particular the same people they were before, believe they are still in the world of matter. In this great spiritual threshing-floor, where the human chaff is gradually winnowed from the human wheat, there are guards along the ways who appear as needed. They maintain order, quell disturbances of the peace, and instruct the new-comers. This sudden coming and going of wise mentors commissioned from the heavenly realms—youthful and pleasing in appearance, ever courteous in manner, able to command obedience by a mere nod or lift of the hand, endowed with seemingly hypnotic powers—causes one of the characters

in the ever-moving drama to refer to them as the "invisible police." There is grim humor in the discomfiture of the proud, selfish, and self-satisfied who demand high seats in heaven immediately; there are satisfying indications of true progress on the part of the modest and worthy; and there are tragic pictures of the still wilfully criminal.

When a New-Churchman reads such a story as this he can scarcely help wondering what will be the impression it will make on those unfamiliar with the New-Church teaching about the entry into the spiritual world through the portal of death. If we were able to judge of the effect in advance, we would have a key to open the door of the mind to this teaching on which Swedenborg lays so much stress. The strength of this story lies in its inherent truth; and yet the impression left on the mind of the reviewer is not altogether favorable. The imprint of the New-Church Press carries with it responsibility. Is it necessary to display evil to such an extent even if done in an unattractive form? *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* The reviewer wonders. And yet he is glad to know that the book is having such favorable reception and comment. One of his friends says that the book makes clear to him teachings about the other life which some of our leading ministers in the New Church have never made clear to him.

Taking everything into consideration the reviewer is grateful to the author for a successful and highly useful presentation of a very vital subject.

JOHN DABOLL.

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